A REVOLUTIONARY MAID

AMY·E·BLANCHARD

Ada R. Briggs.
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BOOKS BY AMY E. BLANCHARD.

A GIRL OF '76. 331 pp. With five full-page Illustrations by IDA WAUGH. 12mo. $1.50.

A REVOLUTIONARY MAID. A STORY OF THE MIDDLE PERIOD OF THE WAR FOR INDEPENDENCE. 321 pages. With five full-page Illustrations by IDA WAUGH. 12mo. $1.50.

A
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A Story of the Middle Period of the War for Independence

BY

AMY E. BLANCHARD

AUTHOR OF "A GIRL OF '76," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY

IDA WAUGH

BOSTON AND CHICAGO

W. A. WILDE COMPANY

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A REVOLUTIONARY MAID.

To the Hallowed Memory of

MY DEARLY BELOVED MOTHER

WHOSE ANCESTORS FOUGHT IN THE MARYLAND LINE

THIS LITTLE BOOK IS DEDICATED

A. E. B.

PREFACE

It has been the author's aim in this volume not only to follow the fortunes of a Revolutionary maid through trying scenes, but to outline the history of the times as closely as might be consistent with a story for girls. Great care has been taken in the study of this period of the war for freedom, and it is hoped that the incidents will carry their weight as matters of history, and that the importance of the campaign in the Middle States may be emphasized in the minds of those who read the story.

Beyond this, it has been the author's endeavor to give a correct picture of the manners and customs of that part of the country in which the scene is laid; to bring out the local coloring, and to draw the characters honestly, with a close regard to the effect of education and environment which at an early period began to indicate the variety of types which are now distinctly American.

To her desire to please her girl friends the author adds a modest hope that the book may not be found uninteresting to older readers.

AMY E. BLANCHARD.

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A REVOLUTIONARY MAID.

CHAPTER I.

A GREAT DAY.

IN one of the pleasant, though somewhat formal, green gardens bordering New York's old Bowery Lane, there stood one day in July, 1776, a fair-haired girl about fourteen years of age. It was about six o'clock, and the sun was still high, but from the embowered box-edged paths were beginning to steal up the fine spicy odors which the evening breeze stirred from the neighborhood of rose bushes or jasmine vine. It was so quiet and peaceful a spot that Katherine De Witt, even in the intentness of her listening to unusual sounds, which just now reached her from the city, sighed in content before she ran in excitement to the gate that she might, perhaps, discover more readily what all this shouting, and gun-firing, and bell-ringing could mean.

As she stood at the gate, peeping out into the road,

some one appeared upon the vine-covered porch before the house, and at the call, "Katherine — Kitty, do you see any one or anything?" she replied, "No, aunt," turning her head for a moment and then peeping out again.

"Oh yes, I do," she added presently. "Here comes some one; 'tis Christopher Van Ness, Aunt Joanna; I know him by his roan horse."

Mrs. Thompson did not wait for the rider to come up before she took a more conspicuous position on the lowest step of the stoop, and the young man, catching sight of her standing there, and seeing Kitty at the gate, drew rein before the iron grating.

"Ha, Mistress Kitty," he said, "art a prisoner behind bars?"

"Indeed, no, Master Van Ness, I but came to see if I could discover what all this disturbance might mean. My aunt would fain hear the news. Will you step inside?"

She swung open the big gate, and the young man alighted and led in his horse, himself walking by Kitty's side to where Mrs. Thompson stood.

"Good evening, madam," he said; "you are lucky not to be nearer the city, else you would hear such a jangling as would stir up your soul to a disgust against such riotous noise."

"And pray, what means it?" asked the lady.

"'Tis that most unpopular bill of writing — a declaration of independence, gotten up by some of these hot-headed and hasty men who style themselves patriots. The writing has been read aloud on the Common, and hence this fuss by the lower classes. I left them tearing down the statue of good King George on Bowling Green, and being sickened at the sight, I turned toward Nicholas Green's, from thence here.

"Is all this true?" exclaimed Mrs. Thompson. "Most uncalled-for it is. Why, it was but a short time ago that the statue was raised, and all were shouting, 'Long live good King George.' Ah, 'tis ever the way of a mob — whatever furnishes excitement is approved, and the very ones who were loudest huzzahing because the Stamp Act was repealed are now loudest in their outcries against their king. 'Tis surely an evil day for those who break laws and make riots. Our town has been turned upside down ever since the streets have been full of this motley army of New Englanders. And how they prate loud-mouthed of liberty and patriotism! 'Twas but this morning came one in, without knocking, and sat down with never an invitation, and began to rail at aristocracy and King George and the redcoats. I had thought we were done with burning effigies and such disturbances. And they pulled down the statue, you say?"

"They did so, and were mounting it on a cart when I came away."

"Hark! What is that?" cried Kitty, lifting her hand.

A louder sound of shouting and hurrahing was heard, and Kitty ran to the gate, followed by her aunt and Christopher.

A rabble of men and boys came up the road. They surrounded a cart drawn by oxen, and mounted upon the cart was the leaden statue of George III., battered and mutilated.

"Where are they taking it, I wonder," said Kitty aloud.

A tall young fellow, striding along waving his hat, heard her. "We're going to turn him into bullets to shoot his own soldiers with," he cried. "Three cheers for liberty!"

"Hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!" came from the throats of the crowd. And the procession passed on, carrying the dishonored figure of King George into the heart of Connecticut, where it was, indeed, moulded into bullets for the patriot army.

As the crowd disappeared up the road in a cloud of dust the silence which had fallen on the three standing at the gate was broken by Mrs. Thompson's indignant exclamation, "Well, to what are we coming!"

"'Tis these pothering, fanatical New Englanders and the fiery Virginians who are the head and front of the business," returned Christopher. "We New Yorkers have more stability and coolness. Is it not so, Mistress Kitty?"

Kitty drew herself away slightly. "I do not meddle with such matters, Christopher. My father can tell you best of these things."

"Can he?" cried Mrs. Thompson. "I am not so sure of that. He blows hot and cold, and I fancy is more of a mind than we imagine to side with these rebels. Since Henry Livingston and Abraham Van Wyck have paraded themselves as captains of this horde we cannot count on Paul De Witt."

Christopher looked thoughtful, and speedily made his adieux. Mrs. Thompson returned to the house, while Kitty made her way to the garden which she had lately left.

The jubilant sounds from the city still came to her ears as she slowly paced the orderly walks till she reached the further side of the garden, the wall of which bordered upon the grounds of Henry Ludlow.

As Kitty approached the wall she was not surprised to hear a voice coming from the other side: "Kitty, is that you?"

"Yes."

"I have something to tell you. Come to the meeting-place."

Kitty followed the line of the wall till she came to a large elm, whose branches overhung both sides. A roughly constructed ladder leaned against the wall. Kitty mounted it, reached the top, and from there crept to a limb which settled into a roomy crotch a little beyond. Some one else was already there; a girl about Kitty's own age, but smaller, and with bright, dark eyes and crisp, curling hair.

"Isn't it glorious!" she exclaimed, as she moved along the limb and settled further in the crotch to make room for Kitty by her side.

"Isn't what glorious?" returned Kitty.

"Why, to-day's work. I was there and saw the enjoyment of the crowd, but Robert and I galloped home ahead of the slow cart with its stupid leaden king, and we saw the crowd as it passed. Did you see, Kitty? Many of my father's friends were among those who pulled down the statue. I saw Mr. John Wiley, and others you know."

"Did I not see? I have just come from watching the crowd go by. My Aunt Joanna was in a high dudgeon over it, and Master Christopher Van Ness was vastly excited."

Elspeth Ludlow turned up her saucy little nose.

"That is nothing new for either of them. Chris Van Ness, indeed! Great lazy lubber! He had better be a-soldiering instead of moping up and down the lanes. Kitty, you don't forget, do you? You are steadfast?"

Kitty hung down her head. "I find it so hard to decide, Elspeth. If my father — if I could be sure that he —" she hesitated.

"Then he is still in that uncomfortable place?"

"Where?"

"On the fence," laughed Elspeth. "Do not draw so long a visage, Kitty. I did not mean to hurt you. He is but where a long line of our neighbors are. Methinks I can see them in my mind's eye, all in a row like a line of crows, not knowing whether to hop over into King George's cornfield, where they will surely fall into traps, or to fly off into the woods, where maybe they will find less to eat, but more freedom."

Kitty listened admiringly. Elspeth was always of so ready a wit that she charmed Kitty into an acceptance of her views on pretty nearly all subjects.

"I am convinced that your father is of a right mind," continued Elspeth, "and that he is but cautious till he shall see how certain matters turn out. My father thinks so. I heard him tell brother Robert the same but this morning. He'll be a stanch patriot yet. My

father says 'tis better to be sure of one's own mind and not be like so many who huzza and clamor for independence till the moment comes for action, and then they slink away. I think, Kitty, you must be built after your father's mould, for you will hardly say you are a patriot yet. But you've got to be. You must make up your mind to-night, for to-morrow something very important has to be done. Remember, it is a serious matter, and if you are my bosom friend you will not refuse to do what is of great importance."

Kitty looked puzzled. Elspeth leaned her chin on her two hands and gazed at Kitty with sparkling eyes and eager face. "You must make up your mind," she repeated, "or else — " she spoke slowly and impressively, "or else I'm afraid each will have to keep her own side the wall."

Kitty was startled. "Oh, Elspeth, what do you mean?"

"I mean that I am a patriot, and if you are not one, we cannot be bosom friends. Don't you see?"

"Oh, but, Elspeth," Kitty began in distress, "I — I can't give you up, and — and — ah, why do these dissensions come to the land?"

"They are right," declared Elspeth. "I will prove it to you to-morrow. But to-night you must make up your mind whether it is king or country for you.

There, I hear mother calling. I must go. The sun is nearly down. Don't forget to-morrow morning at nine o'clock I will meet you here." And she clambered down, leaving Kitty much perturbed.

Elspeth was always so insistent, she reflected. She always knew about what she did or didn't think. She never hesitated to make up her mind. Kitty felt that it was quite true that she, herself, was more cautious. She did not jump at conclusions, and was not so enthusiastic, yet she felt her loyalty once given it would be hard to change her. That was why it was hard to think of giving up her friend. Why did Elspeth insist upon such matters being made an issue between them? They were but two little maids, and what difference could it make what they thought or what they didn't think? She sighed as she arose to climb down the ladder, wishing that Elspeth were less of an enthusiast.

The long shadows told her that it was high time for her to be expecting her father, and indeed, just as she turned out of the box walk she saw him come up on the stoop, and she ran to meet him."

"Oh, father," she cried, "did you see it all?"

"Ay, I did," he answered, "and heard it."

"And what do you think of it?"

Her father retained his hold on the hand he had taken in his, and bent a thoughtful look on the ground.

"Are you a Tory?" asked Kitty, anxiously. "I want much to know, father. I do indeed."

He smiled. "No, child, I'm no Tory."

"Then you have joined the side of the patriots, or the rebels, as Aunt Joanna calls them."

He dropped his daughter's hand. "Out of the mouth of babes," he murmured softly. "Ah, Kitty, you ask searching questions. I trust that I am a patriot; but in your estimation if one is a Tory one cannot be a patriot. Is that how the crow flies?"

Kitty remembered Elspeth's comparisons. "Father," she laughingly whispered, "some one says you are a crow on the fence."

He struck the lash of his riding-whip smartly against the post of the porch. "There is no use temporizing, Kitty," he replied. "To be a patriot one cannot be a neutral, much less a Tory. I am off the fence. To-day I am a patriot." He drew himself up and raised the hand holding the riding-whip, as if saluting some unseen presence. The look on his face awed Kitty.

"Oh!" she said under her breath. "Oh, father!"

"But what do little maids like you know of such matters?" he said. "'Twill be time enough when disasters come, for you to look solemn."

"But we do think of such things; Elspeth does."

"Ah, Elspeth, yes. Henry Ludlow was not long in deciding where his sympathies lay. Where is your Aunt Joanna?"

"She is inside. Oh, father! Aunt Joanna, Christopher Van Ness, and I saw the king's statue go by; and Aunt Joanna was furious."

"'Twas scarce right to tear it down, and the act was condemned by those in authority. Nevertheless, when one sees men like my friend, John Wiley, and Martin Grey given over to an enthusiasm which leads them to such vigorous expression of opinion, one feels dry of fervor if he joins not in."

"But, father, Aunt Joanna — how she will storm if she knows you are a patriot. She does so despise them, and so do the Van Nesses."

"Ah, the Van Nesses, so they do." And Mr. De Witt sighed, then gave a short laugh as he turned to enter the house.

Kitty followed, anxious to learn how her aunt would meet this avowal that her brother had taken up his stand for the American cause and was an enemy to her beloved King George.

But, strange to say, the subject was not alluded to on this particular evening, for some small gossip of a more agreeable nature was agitating Aunt Joanna, and Paul De Witt listened gravely to his sister's chat-

ter. Later, Kitty saw him mount his horse and ride slowly up the road toward the Van Ness homestead, where Christopher's sister, the pretty Widow Gillespie, was waiting to welcome him.

Kitty felt quite a stir of excitement as to the meeting of Elspeth the next morning. She was curious to know what her friend had to propose, and at the same time she was triumphant that her father's decided stand had banished any compunctions she might feel at clasping hands with her bosom friend over the patriot cause. She was, in consequence, a trifle more eager than she otherwise might have been to seek the old elm tree.

Elspeth was already there, and as Kitty clambered up to the wall she cried, "Do hurry, Kitty. I am in such haste to hear what you are going to do."

Kitty threw her arms around her friend as soon as she gained a safe footing. "Oh, Elspeth!" she cried, "we need not part. My father and I are joined to the cause of Washington."

"Good! Good! How pleased I am!" exclaimed Elspeth. "Swear, Kitty, swear that you will give yourself, body and soul, to it."

Kitty shrank back a little. "Oh, Elspeth, I can't swear. I don't know how. I don't think it is right, and 'body and soul' sounds so awful."

Elspeth laughed. "Never mind, then; we will do something else solemn." Elspeth loved the weird and sensational. She parted the leaves and peered down into the garden below to make sure that no one was near. Then she drew from her pocket two papers which she unfolded with an impressive air.

"What is it?" asked Kitty, curiously.

"It is what was the cause of King George's downfall yesterday. 'Tis a copy of the paper which was read out on the Common: a declaration of independence, Mistress De Witt. My brother Robert writes a fair hand, and, at my beseeching, he made a copy for me from that my father has, and I have copied it for you." She looked, with her head to one side, from one paper to the other. "'Tis as well as I could do, but not so pretty a script as my brother's. However, it is all there. I worked hard over it, for it is a long writing. Listen, Kitty, and I will read it, for methinks I know the writing better, and 'twill come easier than if you puzzled out my poor scrawl. 'When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another'" — There under the free, blue summer sky was the Declaration of Independence read, — stumblingly, haltingly, it is true; but as the last clause was reached, Elspeth's

voice trembled with excitement, and Kitty's cheeks bore two red spots.

"Is it not grand?" cried Elspeth, as she laid down the paper.

"Oh, it is," returned Kitty, with fervor.

"Robert says that Mr. John Hancock did so sign it that it seems as if his name were writ with an iron rod. And, Kitty —" She laid her hand on the other's arm.

"What?"

"We must sign it too."

"We?"

"Yes; I am resolved upon it. Oh, I mean just for ourselves. I have thought it all out. You must sign your name, and I will sign mine. We will — we will — do it with our blood!" Her voice sank into a whisper, and her big eyes were fixed upon Kitty to see how she would take this suggestion.

"Oh!" was all that Kitty said; then, after a pause, "How can we do it?"

"Why, 'tis easy enough. We can prick our fingers, and dip a little stick into the blood, and so sign. Come, you will have to go to the garden for a tiny twig that will do, and I will go to the house for a needle. It won't hurt, you know, and we will be shedding our heart's blood for our country."

Kitty did not discover that the shedding of the blood was rather a useless performance, for she was overawed by the idea. It seemed a high privilege; and she clambered down on Elspeth's side of the wall, to roam about the garden till she came upon a slender twig, just as Elspeth returned with the needle.

Judicious pricking brought the red drops to the surface of the rosy fingers, and each little maid solemnly wrote her name: "Katherine De Witt, — Elspeth Ludlow."

"There," Elspeth exclaimed in a satisfied tone, "the deed is done. Now we can never be false to our country. It is much better than a vow."

"It is much better than an oath," returned Kitty, nursing her pricked finger.

"I think so too. Ah, Kitty, I am so glad you are a true patriot, but —" she hesitated.

"What?" inquired Kitty.

"Why, the Van Nesses are all stanch Tories. What will happen if your father marries the Widow Gillespie?"

"The Widow Gillespie?" echoed Kitty.

"Yes; they say 'tis all arranged. Oh, have I told you news? Perhaps I should not have said anything; but — oh, Kitty, if it is so, and she does re-

main a Tory, don't — don't let her coax you to break our compact, and become a turncoat!"

Kitty looked very grave. She had long cherished a secret devotion for the pretty widow, and would gaze at her admiringly as she sat in her pew in old Trinity Church; and when the fair dame passed on horseback, Kitty, behind the gate, would watch her out of sight, feeling that to be a red-letter day which gave her a glimpse of her adored one. So now her lips trembled as she answered, "She shall not, — no, she shall not, and neither will my father be a turncoat." Then, without saying good-by, she climbed the wall, and was over in her own garden before Elspeth quite realized that she meant to go.

CHAPTER II

SOME AFFRIGHTS

AT the same time that Elspeth was reading the Declaration to Kitty, the Provincial Congress at White Plains was listening to the noble words. To many of the New Yorkers the indorsement of the instrument meant the giving up of privileges which would greatly reduce their powers and estates. But they did not long hesitate. A swift messenger was sent to their delegates empowering them to vote for the Declaration, and, on July 18, came the public reading from the City Hall.

"We have come in line at last," announced Mr. De Witt, nodding across the table to Kitty, that morning.

Aunt Joanna dropped her knife. "Paul," she exclaimed, "what are you talking about? 'We've come in line.' Who?"

"We patriots," he said calmly, although he crumbled his bread a little nervously, and did not meet his sister's eye.

"'We patriots!'" cried Aunt Joanna, in indignant tones. "'Tis the cant phrase of the rebels. You have gone over to the enemy!" Then she rose majestically. "Your house cannot harbor me any longer." And she sailed out of the room, leaving Kitty and her father looking after her.

"I wonder where she is going," gasped Kitty. "Oh, father, will she really go?"

"I doubt it not," he returned. "I expected such an issue, and it is one of the reasons of my indecision. One finds it hard to break up family ties, but it is a consequence of war. I refrained as long as I could from announcing my position; but, with Howe's sails crowding the Narrows, with the daily prospect of conflict, I could not hold back, and the news would have to come to her sooner or later that I have joined the army."

Kitty jumped to ner feet. "Father, have you? Now Elspeth cannot triumph over me. But — oh, will you have to fight, and shall I be left here all alone?"

Her father was thoughtful over his untasted breakfast. "I think you will not have to be long alone. The servants are all here. Do you not think you can manage a little time till — a crisis comes?"

At this moment Mrs. Thompson appeared, her head high in the air. "I suppose you will not re-

fuse me conveyance and escort, Paul, even if I am to be no longer a member of your household," she said.

"Did I ever refuse you anything?" he replied gently.

His sister gave a little gulp and held out her hands to Kitty. "Come with me, my child," she said.

But Kitty drew closer to her father, and put her arm around his neck. "Where my father lives, there do I," she replied. "I shall go elsewhere only when he bids me."

"And I have tried to do my duty by you these three years," sobbed Aunt Joanna. "I beg of you, Paul, do not separate us."

"I am not separating you, my sister," he replied. "'Tis your own act and not mine."

"But your loyalty — your king — Oh, Paul!"

"My loyalty is to my country; and we have no king."

"Wicked and treasonable sentiments!" Aunt Joanna's anger was now uppermost. "I will not listen to them. If you so choose to make this house a den of treason from which I would rescue your daughter, I am powerless to prevent it, since tears and prayers move you not. When your wretched advisers are in irons, may the king have mercy on such as you, poor misguided creature. Farewell! I

leave you, I trust, to a kindly fate. I shall take up my abode with my friend, Mistress Margaret Gillespie." And Mrs. Thompson sailed out of the room.

"Mistress Gillespie!" repeated Kitty.

Her father put his arm around her. "Never fear, my little one, but that Margaret Gillespie will welcome your father's sister, and urge her to think kindly of him. I do not believe your aunt will stay long away." And he smiled.

He was right, as events soon proved.

It was the very next day that Kitty, in her new position as chatelaine of the establishment, feeling it beneath her dignity to hold conferences in a tree, sent a note by one of the servants, to Elspeth, asking her to come in and spend the morning with her. She felt very grown up as she did this, and when Elspeth appeared she met her with a little new air of dignity which went far toward making Elspeth feel that somehow Kitty had suddenly become leader where she had heretofore been follower.

"Why, Kitty, you are really the head of the house," she said.

"Yes," replied Kitty; "I thought I ought to be at hand if the servants wanted me, and that is why I asked you to come over, Elspeth, for I do want to hear about yesterday's reading. I wanted much to

go, but my aunt's leaving compelled me to stay at home."

"It was fine, Kitty; you should have been there to hear it. The whole city turned out, and how they did cheer. After it was over there were some who went into the court-room and brought out the royal coat-of-arms, which they burned in the street."

"They did that?"

"Yes, and there we were proclaiming our freedom within reach of the British fleet, my father said. Oh, but it was fine! But tell me, where has your aunt gone?"

"To Mistress Gillespie's."

"She will not stay long, I suppose; and you have your father at night."

"No," replied Kitty, her chin quivering, but her eyes full of triumph, "he is with his company encamped; and my aunt does not intend to return."

"What!" cried Elspeth. "Why, Kitty, when did all this happen?"

"But yesterday. You know I told you my father was a patriot, but I did not tell you he had joined the army, because I did not know it myself, but he has done so, and when he told my aunt she was exceedingly angry and said she would no longer stay here: so she is gone, and I am here alone."

"Oh, Kitty! But then, you have the five colored slaves and your good Hannah and Martha in the house to see to everything."

"Yes, to be sure, and I am not afraid, but it seems a lonely house when I think that I am really here without father or Aunt Joanna; although, I must say that I feel more free when I need not look to be brought to task by Aunt Joanna for every little thing I do which does not exactly suit her."

Elspeth was quite subdued by the importance which these experiences gave her friend, but she said, "Well, we are very near, thank fortune."

"Yes, and I wish you'd stay with me as much as ever you can. My father would have taken me to my cousin's in the city, but that he does not like to have me where there is so much rioting and confusion while the streets are full of soldiers."

"Yes, but you should see the soldiers, Kitty: the Virginians in their white smocks and ruffles; the Washington Guards in their buff and blue; the Marylanders in their green hunting-shirts, and the funny uniforms of all sorts of mixtures, from hither and yon. My brother Robert pointed them all out to me."

"I should like to have seen them," said Kitty, gravely looking up from the stocking she was knitting,

"but I thought I ought to stay at home; besides, I had no one to take me, for my father is not quartered in the city. I don't mind being here alone with the servants in the daytime," Kitty went on, recurring to the subject, "but I wish you could come and stay at night with me; at least, till I get used to it."

This Elspeth promised to do, and night saw the two in the big four-poster bed in the best room in the house.

"Somehow I feel safer in here," Kitty remarked; "the windows are high up from the ground, and we can lock ourselves in. Shall we dare to leave the windows open?"

"Of course," said Elspeth, laughing. "It is too warm to shut them. We shall no doubt go to sleep and never wake up till broad daylight." But here she was mistaken, for they were barely asleep when a thundering knock came at the front door, and both heads popped up in terror from their pillows.

"What's that?" whispered Kitty, fearfully.

"I don't know. Let's go and see," came the answer, also in a whisper.

"Oh no, I should never dare to go. Wait, and let us listen if it comes again."

But the noise had evidently awakened the servants, for they were scurrying through the hall, and pres-

ently a light was seen shining under the crack of the door.

"I am going to get up and look out," announced Elspeth, overcome by curiosity.

"No, don't!" Kitty tried to detain her, but Elspeth sprang out of bed and tiptoed to the window; Kitty getting courage to sit up and watch her.

"What is it?" she asked, in a low tone.

"Two or three people are below in the garden. I cannot see, but I think some one called you."

Kitty listened; she did hear her name spoken, at first softly, and then louder and louder came the call: "Kitty, Kitty, are you awake? Hannah, Martha, where are you all?"

"It is Aunt Joanna!" cried Kitty, jumping up and running to the window. "Aunt Joanna, is it you?"

"Yes, yes. Send some one to let us in," was the reply given impatiently.

The girls quickly unbarred the door and went out into the hall, but not before Hannah and Martha in their nightcaps were before them, and, bearing a candle apiece, were on their way to the lower floor. Kitty and Elspeth in their nightgowns and bare feet followed, to see, when the door was opened, Aunt Joanna and Mrs. Gillespie; but, catching a sight of

Christopher Van Ness behind the others, the two girls fled tumultuously back to their room, and hastily got themselves into their clothes, and again appeared before Aunt Joanna and her friends, to whom she was vehemently expressing her indignation.

"But what does it all mean?" asked the girls.

"It means," retorted Aunt Joanna, indignantly, "that the house was entered by a body of this fine soldiery my brother Paul has joined, and that they laughed to scorn our demands to desist when they helped themselves to whatever they wanted."

"And they had the audacity to order us to prepare food and serve them in our own house," sobbed Mrs. Gillespie, who was in a half-hysterical state.

"And where was Mr. William Van Ness? and all the servants, where were they?" asked Kitty.

"William is in Albany, and the menservants have fled to the British ships. Christopher and I meant to leave for Philadelphia to-morrow, taking your aunt with us," Mrs. Gillespie informed them.

"The men thought you already gone, perhaps," ventured Elspeth. "Are they still there?"

"I know not. Christopher galloped up, and we did not stay to see results, for we feared harm might come to my brother."

"They called us Tories, and rudely scoffed at us

for defending his majesty; brutal robbers that they were," put in Aunt Joanna.

Elspeth and Kitty looked at each other. Was this the way their boasted patriot army conducted itself?

"Never mind, never mind," quoth Aunt Joanna; "it will not be long that they can boast; his majesty's fleet, even now, is ready to protect us. Ere long this rebellion will be quelled. But we could not allow ourselves to be subjected to the presence of those vile creatures, and so we shall take refuge here till we can return. It is a choice of two evils; a Tory household with the company of rebels, or a rebel household with, perhaps, like company."

Kitty bit her lip at the ungracious remark, but she spoke up bravely: "Father will protect us."

"Your father! Perhaps 'twas even he who sent them," snapped Aunt Joanna.

"Oh, Joanna," protested Mrs. Gillespie, "you know that cannot be true. They were not so very rude, Kitty, only too self-confident and assured. They were aggressive only by their presence in a house where they had no right. I am sure Paul, Mr. De Witt, will not countenance their behavior. Come, can we not seek our couches, and let these children, too, retire?"

Aunt Joanna, brought to a sense of her duty, as-

sumed her old position as mistress of the house, and the girls were bidden to go back to bed, while the others soon followed.

It was, however, a wakeful night for them all, and Kitty arose betimes the next morning, her dominion over. Nevertheless, there were more excitements in store; for while they were all at breakfast, the door of the room which led into the garden was darkened by the figure of a man clad in a nondescript uniform. He was a young fellow, and there was a twinkle in his eye as he beheld the two ladies before him. "Good morning, ladies," he said, bowing. "We meet again. This is a Tory house too, then?"

"Oh, no, it isn't," burst in Kitty.

The man cast a glance at her, but her aunt chid her: "Hush, Kitty. And what if it is?" she said, turning to the man.

"Well, madam, we feel that we have a right to confiscate the belongings of those who are our enemies."

"But—" Kitty began again, jumping up.

"Sit down, Katherine," commanded her aunt. "You are very insolent, sir. I have dwelt in this house for years, and my ancestor, whose portrait you see above the mantel, died for his king. His granddaughter is ready to do the same, if needs be—"

But here Elspeth spoke up: "Indeed, Mr. Soldier, this is not the house of a Tory."

"No, it doesn't seem so," laughed the man to one of his companions who had come to his side and was listening.

Aunt Joanna cast a withering look on Elspeth. "You are not in the house of the rebel, Ludlow," she exclaimed.

"You are a little Whig, maybe," said the man, smiling down on the eager girl, "but this lady speaks of this as her home. What think you, Grey? She is most emphatic in her declaration, is she not? My little girl," addressing Elspeth, "if you do not live here, you'd better run home. We shall, perhaps, take up quarters here."

"Oh, but—" Kitty broke from her aunt's restraining hand, "but, sir, my father is an American soldier—a patriot. His name is Paul De Witt. Don't you know him?"

The man shook his head. "Can't say that I do. Will you be so good, madam, as to order breakfast for our men?"

"I will not," snapped Aunt Joanna.

"Then, we shall be under the painful necessity of helping ourselves."

"And shall you take our house away from us?"

"'I SIGNED IT JUST AS JOHN HANCOCK DID.'"

asked Kitty, her lip quivering. "I am a patriot, and I tell the truth when I say, so is my father."

"I am sorry, my dear young lady, but this lady seems to be the one in possession here." And he waved his hand toward Mrs. Thompson.

Kitty stood still a moment in despair, and then she darted out of the room, and came back in a moment with a paper, which she held out in a shaking hand. "See, see," she said, "it is mine. I signed it just as John Hancock did. This is my home and my father's. Now do you believe that we are friends, not foes?"

The man took the paper, still smiling incredulously at the girl's reiteration. He opened the sheet, on which was written in Elspeth's round, childish hand, the Declaration of Independence, and on the last page he saw in gory letters the name Katherine De Witt.

"So that's your name in red ink," he said. "And, bless us, Grey, it is the Declaration, as sure as anything. Well, my maid, you may be a patriot, but your mother — this lady — certainly is not."

"No, not my mother; my aunt she is," Kitty corrected. "Please, please leave us in peace."

"Well, if a patriot you are, you will not deny us food, so get your servants to work, for we are hungry."

Kitty glanced about for Elspeth, but she was gone; and Aunt Joanna, after a sign to Mrs. Gillespie, haugh-

tily left the room, going to her own apartment, where the two ladies sat behind barred doors while the soldiers remained.

There were not a great many of them, and Kitty resolved that it was the duty of a soldier's daughter to give food to her father's comrades, even though she did not approve of their manner of demanding it. "I know my father would be glad to give you of his stores," she said, "but he would not wish you to so entreat us," she said, with a little dignified air. "I will see that you are served."

"'Tis a pity your aunt is of so high-spirited and defiant a manner, else we would not have molested you. We had gone to the Van Ness house, and there encountered her sharp speeches, and from there we tracked her here; hence we believed this, too, to be a Tory house. But if you are friends, and we are welcome, so much the better."

The men were scarcely through their meal when the clatter of a horse's approach and the creak of a gate told of a new arrival; and, before many minutes, to Kitty appeared her father.

"And how are you getting on, my lass?" he asked, as he swung himself down from his saddle.

"I am so glad you have come, father," cried Kitty, excitedly. "The place is full of soldiers, and Aunt

Joanna has come back with Mrs. Gillespie, and they are both locked in their room, and the soldiers would not believe we were friends." Kitty poured out her news without stopping.

"Humph!" returned her father. "I shall have to look after all this. Where are these men? Did they treat you discourteously?"

"No, not ill; they but declared that we were Tories, and that our property was theirs to take. They said — at least their leader did — that they might take up quarters here. They are now finishing a good breakfast."

"I'll see who this doughty officer is," remarked Captain De Witt. Kitty waited and listened. She was a patriot, she told herself, and yet — and yet, she did not like these men. Presently she heard a noise of clanking swords, and out of the gate marched the soldiers. Their leader, a sergeant, caught sight of the little girl, and called out, "Our thanks for a very good breakfast."

Captain De Witt came back smiling. "So you signed the Declaration, and have tried to maintain the honor of the house?" he said. "I have chidden these men, who have no right to enter this house nor to disturb any other, although they are heartily welcome to all I have. I must confess to objecting to

their way of demanding it, however; but in time of war it is hard to control all this herd of reckless creatures. Your man was full of apologies. Come now, let us seek your aunt. We must get you all away from here, for there are anxious times coming, and New York is likely to see bloodshed."

"Oh, father," gasped Kitty, "tell me about it."

"Fortifications are being made all along the water-front; the streets are barricaded, and there are more troops coming in every day, while the prospects are that a battle is sure to come. It will not be safe for you here." And this he repeated to his sister and her friend.

The former berated the patriots soundly; the latter gave him an appealing glance. He went over to her, and took her hand. "Margaret," he said, "you promised, if the worst came."

"Yes, I know," she replied, hanging her head. "But I did not believe you would go so far as to array yourself against your king."

He dropped her hand, and stood off from her. "Must I give you up then, or must I disobey my conscience?"

The pretty widow reflected a moment; then she held out her hand. "Since it comes to that," she replied, "I can, perhaps, follow my conscience in one way as well as another. So have your way, Paul."

Kitty, listening, was not surprised a little later, to witness in old Trinity Church the marriage of her father to Mistress Gillespie, and to learn that, with this new mother, she was shortly to be sent to Philadelphia out of harm's way.

"And leave my father?" she faltered.

"But he is my husband," whispered the new Mrs. De Witt. "He thinks it best, Kitty, my child. We will try to comfort each other, and we will love each other the more, will we not? I want to be a real mother to you."

Kitty looked up wistfully. She was glad of the new relationship, for she had always been fascinated by the pretty woman and her charming ways. So she smiled through her tears, and asked, "May I call you mother?"

"Oh, will you?" said the other, joyfully. "Will you?" And she gave her a hug. "Dear heart," she said, "we can help your father more by going than by staying."

"But Aunt Joanna, will she remain?" asked Kitty.

"No; she is going to her cousins in Jersey, but we shall all start forth together."

CHAPTER III

A JOURNEY

AUNT JOANNA was still indignant over the behavior of the soldiers, whose intrusion she resented, and she made her complaints in no undecided terms to her brother; but she was slightly mollified by his assurance that their acts had no official warrant, and that a body of raw, undisciplined men, not yet understanding the regulations of a well-drilled army, was likely to contain many lawless spirits, who believed that pillage and the destruction of property was a real right of the soldier. Furthermore, he told her, that among the higher officers such conduct was strongly censured, and was formally condemned by the provincial congress.

"Nevertheless," said Captain De Witt, "you will all be safer away from here."

"But we do not have to go yet. Let us stay as long as we can," pleaded Kitty.

"Surely it is not necessary to go at once," Mrs. De Witt hastened to uphold Kitty by saying. "Christo-

pher has gone on ahead, but he will come back to escort us when the time comes."

So Captain De Witt yielded, and the days slipped away till a morning in August, when a messenger came galloping up the road. "Howe has landed," he gave the information. "Captain De Witt bids you depart at once. He could not come himself, being on duty."

Everything had for days been in readiness, but last preparations would take a little time, and Kitty slipped forth to the old elm tree to take her farewell of Elspeth.

When should she see the dear old garden again? the smiling orchard and the shady lane? When should she set foot in the old house which had sheltered grandfather and great-grandfather? She looked at the fence-posts, surmounted so strangely with the skulls of horses and cattle. These had no ghastly association for her; she but thought of them as the abodes of the dear friendly wrens. She looked back at the stoop, with its covering of vines; its benches and lattice; here, too, would birds build undisturbed by the roar of cannon or the tramp of soldiers. She gave a glance at the old well-sweep; at the stable-yard, where the horses were already standing ready to take them on the first stage of their journey. The door of the house was open, and through the broad hall Kitty could see to

the other end. When should she again run blithely down the wide staircase, patting the carved mahogany hand-rail, as she went? Ah, when! She thought of all this as she walked slowly along, and climbed for a last time the ladder which led to the crotch in the elm tree.

She gave a soft, low whistle, but there was no reply. She craned her neck through the branches to the other side, but saw no approaching figure. Finally, she climbed down and stepped off the ladder into the garden of her neighbor; then she ran toward the house.

It was quite a walk through the garden and orchard, but the way was pleasant. Kitty was dimly conscious that all was very quiet, but she was so absorbed in her thoughts that she did not notice that the whole place was deserted until she came full upon the house and saw it closed, locked, and barred.

She gave a little exclamation of surprise, and ran forward to the stoop; she ran from one window to another; she searched the summer-house, the out-buildings, All were empty. The family had gone.

Before her investigations were over Kitty heard herself peremptorily called from over the wall of her own garden: "Kitty, Kitty, where are you? Come at once."

She ran back with a heavy heart. It seemed such

a dreadful thing to be going away without one word of farewell to Elspeth, and this, added to the thought of leaving her father, brought her into the presence of her aunt with the tears rolling down her cheeks.

"There, now, my child, do not weep," said Mrs. De Witt, as she beheld the little girl stumbling down the steps to the coach before the door. "We shall soon be back again."

"But Elspeth has gone, and I have not said farewell to her nor to father either, and I may never see them again," sobbed Kitty.

For an instant Mrs. De Witt's lip quivered, but she said comfortingly: "Do not let us borrow trouble, my little daughter. I do not think your father can keep away from us very long. And as for Elspeth, — Do you know where the Ludlows have gone, Joanna?"

"No, nor do I wish to," replied Aunt Joanna, stiffly. "'Tis such as Henry Ludlow who have led my brother astray. Martha, I think, did say they went off in the early dawn of the morning, up the Bloomingdale road. They have, doubtless, gone further up the country where Cynthia Ludlow has kin-folk."

By degrees, Elspeth and the home-leaving were lost in the curiosity which Kitty felt at the appearance of the city, which, indeed, presented a warlike aspect. All the streets, leading up to the water, were barricaded

with cordons of boxes, barrels, kegs, logs and branches of trees, and stones. The City Hall park was quite surrounded by them. Opposite St. Paul's Church, Broadway was so barred, and other streets were, at various points, closed to travel.

It brought the danger very near, and even Mrs. Thompson was silently troubled, as could be seen, as in crossing the ferry over to Jersey, the fortifications on the Brooklyn shore could be seen.

"I would we were safe within the king's lines, Peggy," she said at last. "If Paul would but submit and acknowledge his error, he could yet receive pardon, and we should yet be out of this anxious strife."

"Strife it will be, I feel sure," returned Mrs. De Witt, in a low tone. "I have not realized the seriousness of it till now. We shall have to use our joint influence to save him, Joanna. I dread the result of Howe's arrival."

"To a certain extent I am willing to do all I can for Paul," replied Aunt Joanna, "but if he prove obstinate, I wash my hands of him. There is no thanks in trying to serve one who glories in wrong-doing."

Mrs. De Witt only sighed, but made no answer. She well knew her sister-in-law's inflexible spirit against those who gave her offence.

At Elizabethtown Mrs. Thompson found a convey-

ance which took her across country to her destination, while Kitty and her mother journeyed onward to Philadelphia, reaching there in two days from their time of starting.

"'Tis very comfortable to have a stage-coach," remarked Mrs. De Witt. "Two years ago it took a day longer. Surely we are progressing to be able to make the journey in so short a time." This, as Kitty complained of being somewhat stiff from sitting so long and from the jolting over the rough road, never before having gone so far from home.

Her mother sighed as they drew near to their journey's end. "Ah, me! I would we knew what was going on at home."

Kitty immediately took alarm. "Oh, mother, do you think there will be bloodshed?"

But Mrs. De Witt did not answer, for there was Christopher waiting for them. He had not received notice of their coming soon enough to give them his escort, but was on hand to receive them as the stage-coach drew up. He gave a smile to each, and would have kissed them both, but Kitty drew back.

"Am I not your uncle?" he said, laughing. "And you will not greet me as becomes a niece."

Her uncle, indeed! Kitty flushed up and looked as severely defiant as possible.

"There, there, Christopher," said his sister, "the child is tired; have done with your teasing. Indeed, we are both ready for a dish of tea and a quiet corner, for our bones are sadly shaken with the long journey, and our night's rest was none of the soundest, since the soldiery resorting to the inn where we were lodged made a merry night of it."

"A dish of tea —" began Kitty, and then stopped, for she saw a spark of mischief in Christopher's eye, and thought it well to hold her tongue lest she bring forth some further teasing remark. So she contented herself with looking around at this new city, deciding that she preferred her own sweet lanes and roads to the checkerboard squares of the Quaker city.

"'Tis as prim a looking city as one could find," remarked Mrs. De Witt. "But then it is a Quaker town."

"Withal, you will find riches a-plenty, good living, and great comfort here," responded Christopher. "You need not fear that you will lack a merry time if you desire it, my niece."

"I pray you call me not niece," returned Kitty, pettishly, "for I'll have no such uncle."

"Have done, Christopher," again said Mrs. De Witt. "Is this the house? How plain and square it is; yet it has an air of comfort."

They entered the solid-looking house, and were met by Mrs. Rush, who greeted them heartily. "Well, Peggy, so you have entered again the matrimonial state, and in so sly a way we scarcely credited it when Christopher told us. And a Whig — a rebel soldier is your husband; fie on you!"

Mrs. De Witt smiled, and Kitty bit her lip. It was "out of the frying-pan into the fire," if she had escaped from Aunt Joanna only to hear such talk.

"This is my little daughter Kitty," said Mrs. De Witt; "and I'll warrant you she'll have a poor impression of you, Lavinia, if you begin by denouncing her father."

"She is a sweet child," returned Mrs. Rush, admiringly. "We'll have to get a Tory husband for her, and she'll be soon singing 'God save the King' as lustily as any one. Law, Christopher! but you'd make a pretty husband for her."

Kitty cast an appealing glance at Mrs. De Witt, who put an arm around her, saying, "There, Lavinia, do not give the child such notions. There is time enough for Kitty to think of such things a couple of years hence. She is more in need of a good brewing of tea than of a gallant at this moment. Come, Kitty dear, lay off your hat and come sit by this window. Sister Lavinia has a fair sort of a garden, if

it is all at the back of the house. It would seem that even the roses here are as shy as Quaker lasses, for they show not their faces in public. There, drink your tea, child, and get rested."

Kitty took the fragile little cup in her hand, but presently she set it down on the table.

"Is it not sweet enough?" asked Mrs. Rush, poising her sugar-tongs above the silver bowl, which stood on the mahogany tea-board by her side.

"It is not that," replied Kitty, shyly; "but I cannot drink tea."

"You do not like it?"

"Yes, ma'am, but" — she hesitated, "but we patriots do not drink it. I promised."

"Who? Your father?"

"No; I promised my friend, Elspeth Ludlow. I promised solemnly."

"Ah, my dear," said Mrs. Rush, shaking a finger at her, "we'll have to cure you of that. You are in a Tory household, remember, and must do as we do."

"Must I?" whispered Kitty to her mother.

She shook her head. "Do not press her, Lavinia. We must not begin by force. Silken bands and soft speech win more easily than the lash and the sharp command. Kitty has had too much of that."

"Is it in such a fashion you will win back your recreant husband to loyalty? I'll warrant you it will be your way. I remember, Peggy, you were ever a fine one for coaxing. Never mind, then, Kitty; you shall have a substitute. Here, Christopher, brew her a cup; and then you two go in the garden whilst Peggy and I talk over matters. When two sisters have been parted as long as we have, there are many confidences to be turned over between them. Show Kitty how prettily you can play the beau, Christopher, and leave us to our dish of gossip."

And therefore, when Kitty had finished her make-believe tea, she followed Christopher out into the garden, a homesick feeling taking possession of her, which added to her desire to learn the latest news from New York.

"You are very sad and silent, Kitty," said Christopher, who was really a good-hearted lad.

"Oh, but I am. We heard, as we were leaving home, that the British were landing, and who knows what may have happened?"

Christopher looked thoughtful. "Only one thing can happen," he said. "The British will take New York, of course. I am sorry your father is with the rebels, but he has a host of friends among the king's followers, so I doubt not he will be pardoned, else

I am sure my sister could not be so cheerful, nor so willing to leave home. I know that both she and your aunt think that it will be only a short time before he returns to his allegiance."

"Oh!" Kitty looked distressed. It was very hard for a little girl, the majority of whose friends and acquaintances were of the king's party, to maintain a steadfast attitude as a patriot. Yet Kitty was determined to do it, for was not Elspeth stanch and true? and had not her father declared himself for the cause of freedom? So she said no more, but slowly paced the walks with Christopher, and listened to his account of Philadelphia.

"You are so fond of plants and flowers," he said, "I must take you a-riding. We will go out to see a wonderful garden which one John Bartram has made."

Kitty brightened. Nothing could have pleased her more than the prospect of a ride. If there were two things which she had always loved above her other possessions, these were her horse and her flowers. "Ah, that I had my dear Lady Gay," she said.

"Where is she?"

"All our other horses have gone to camp. My father would not withhold one of them, but he would

not put so sore a trial on me as to ask me if I were willing to part with my Lady Gay for the sake of my country. So she is still in New York at Mr. William Van Ness's."

"Humph!" Christopher's face expressed disapprobation. "'Twere a great pity if she were to be used in so ill a cause," he said crossly.

Kitty drew herself up. "If that is your opinion, Master Van Ness, I beg you will choose some one else to whom to express it, and, also, that you will choose some other partner in your rides."

Christopher immediately became all humility. "Pray do not let us quarrel, Kitty, we who have always been neighbors, and are now, if not blood-kin, at least related."

"I quarrel! I have no desire to even have speech with you," replied Kitty, following up her advantage.

"Oh, but you and I are here under one roof. We are too young to meddle with politics; so why let them make a breach between us? This affray, in which the country is now embroiled, will soon blow over."

"It will not. The Whigs will fight to the bitter end! My father said so. If you are his enemy, you are mine."

"But I am no one's enemy. I'm simply not a

partisan at all. Surely a lad of eighteen need not meddle with the affairs of state, nor expect it his duty to be drawn into a brawl."

"Indeed!" There was scorn in Kitty's tones. "And how about Robert Ludlow and Walter Vanderpoel? Are they so much older?"

Christopher looked down. "No, they are no older, but they are very impetuous and foolhardy."

Kitty's eyes looked from half-closed lids, and her lips curled under her scornful little nostrils. "You certainly don't improve your case," she said, turning to go into the house.

"Stay, Kitty," begged Christopher. "I'll promise you not another word against your friends. I am your father's brother-in-law, and I wish him well, even if I can't join his company."

"Why can't you?" Kitty turned on him.

"Because I — I believe in the king's cause."

"Then go fight for the king, but don't stand gawking about like a half-fledged chicken. Why, half of those lads from New England and the South are no older than you."

"You think me a coward, or else you want to get rid of me."

Kitty's foot tapped the ground, but she made no reply.

Christopher plucked a white rose, and held it out to her, with a conciliatory smile. "Here, let us call a truce," he said. "This is my flag. No more hostilities, Miss Kitty. Accept my overtures of peace, or I will beat a retreat, if you say so."

Kitty suddenly realized that it was a graceless act of hers to order away her mother's brother, who certainly had a better right in the house of his sister than she had. So she held out her hand for the rose, which she tucked in her bodice.

"And you will ride with me?" said Christopher.

Kitty hesitated. Her mother would tell her to go, she reflected. Her father had intrusted her to his wife's care, and she might as well have a good time, for Christopher was not an open enemy; he was like almost all her friends — a neutral. So she nodded "Yes," and Christopher began to make plans for a series of rides and walks, and the two sisters from their window looked out and smiled to see the boy and girl walking in the garden, laughing merrily, the white rose in Kitty's bodice glimmering out of the dusk.

But it was two weeks before Kitty had her ride to John Bartram's farm by the Schuylkill River. And in that time came, first, the news that a battle fought on Long Island had given victory to the British;

that Washington had conducted a masterly retreat to New York, and that the Tories were jubilant. Captain De Witt wrote a letter from his own home, describing events. "But for the misapplied zeal of three of our videttes, I should have other news for you," he wrote to his daughter; "but that there were some who chose to reconnoitre ahead of our lines, and so let the enemy in at the rear, we might not have been defeated. Be a good child and don't let them make a Tory of you."

Aunt Joanna, too, sent a letter which rang a triumphant note: "'Tis as I thought: the little mob of rebels ran pell-mell at the first onslaught. We'll soon be at home again, Peggy. Don't let Kitty make too free use of her tongue. The child follows her father's lead like a brainless lamb, and her little bleat is a weak imitation of his more blatant ba-a."

But Kitty did not see this letter, and her mother was too wise to discuss the situation in her presence. Christopher, too, knew the value of silence on the subject. Only Mrs. Rush was openly exultant.

Things were quiet for some time after this, and Kitty took her ride out to the old botanist's, where she was vastly pleased with the varieties of trees and shrubs which the old man had from all parts of the world.

The girl was given a bunch of rare flowers to carry home, and these Christopher tied to her saddle.

"We'll go to Chestnut Hill some day soon," he said.

"I like this wooded road," replied Kitty. "And such a quaint house on the river's bank. I think your John Bartram a very wise man."

"So he is, but the Quakers have turned him out of meeting."

"Oh, the Quakers. They are in great force here, but they seem a narrow set."

"They are well meaning and peaceable; good livers and direct of speech. We'll go to one of their meeting-houses some day. I must show you all that Philadelphia has for you to see."

"I like better our own Trinity than all the Quaker meetings put together, for all there is such feeling against the church. Because it is the Church of England is no reason why it should be persecuted by those who love freedom." She bit her lip as she remembered that she was censuring her own party, but Christopher only smiled, as he said: "You like Christ Church. One sees much fine dressing there."

"So one does, but one's own home and one's own church are always best," Kitty sighed. She was

thinking of her own garden, now neglected and wild; of Elspeth on the other side of the wall; of Lady Gay, whinnying in the stable, and she grew so silent the rest of the way that Christopher could not rouse her, even by his liveliest attempts at wit.

CHAPTER IV.

ABOUT A FLAG AND SEVERAL THINGS.

AS the riders stopped before the door of Mrs. Rush's house, Mrs. De Witt came running down the steps. "Oh, Kitty," she cried, "hasten, we have had news. New York has been entered by the British, and there is claimed a victory at Harlem Heights for your father's party."

Kitty tremblingly put out her hands to Christopher, who lifted her down, and, not even removing her riding-mask from her face, nor her bunch of flowers, from where it dangled at her saddle, she picked up her skirts and ran indoors. "Tell me all," she said excitedly.

Her mother gathered her into her arms. "Ah, Kitty," she replied, with a catch in her voice, "it is a dreadful thing to be so torn by one's feelings, as to dread victory for one side lest it mean despair to one's husband, and to dread it for the other lest it mean ruin for one's family. So far, thank God, your father is safe. I have a scribble of a note from him,

written just after the battle. He sends you his dear love, but he thinks this but the beginning of more troublous times. Is it not sad that he has a Tory wife?" she added, her eyes shining.

Kitty looked at her steadfastly. "I don't believe you are," she whispered.

Mrs. De Witt laughed. "Do I not drink tea, and drink it strong?" she answered, as she turned to where Mrs. Rush sat by her little tea-board.

Yet, somehow, Kitty felt that at heart her mother was nearer in sympathy with her than she would confess. And this the more so, that when, a few days later, came news of the great fire in New York, she vehemently protested that it was not the work of the Whigs.

"I say 'tis not so," she told her sister. "Have not the British set upon Tories as well as upon Whigs, hanging one man by the heels till he died? so Christopher tells us, and others have been murdered outright. No, Lavinia, all the evil deeds cannot be imputed to the Whigs."

"And our dear Trinity Church is burned," sighed Kitty. "What a disaster that is!"

"Truly, yes, though a church can be rebuilt, but who can give back the lives of those who have fallen in battle?" returned Mrs. De Witt, sadly.

"I wish I could see my father," Kitty made reply, hiding her tearful eyes in her mother's lap. "Shall we not see him at Christmas or at New Year?"

"Who can tell? It does not look very encouraging," replied Mrs. De Witt. "But we'll try to have a happy time here, although the Quakers make little of Christmas." Then, suddenly, "How should you like to go to Jersey for Thanksgiving? You could spend a time with Aunt Joanna. I doubt not she will be overjoyed to see you, for never a holiday has she spent away from you since your birth."

Kitty looked a little doubtful. "You are sure father will not be here?"

"I think it is most unlikely."

"Then I'll go if you think best."

Kitty was too much of a little girl not to let present pleasures thrust aside political questions, and she was beginning to sigh for some other companions than Christopher, who rather bored her by treating her like a young lady, or Mrs. Rush and Mrs. De Witt, who discussed the intricacies of making lint and Irish stitch, while the little girl sat by and obediently worked on a piece of canvas a remarkable bunch of flowers. This and her lessons with her mother were not altogether uninteresting each day, but she missed Elspeth, who heretofore had shared lessons with her, a governess

being always employed in the Ludlow family. And so with no strict hours to maintain, Kitty would spend much time wandering about the garden, and sometimes even about the streets.

It was one day after she had thus made her escape, that she decided upon going down to Second Street to get more crewels. It was a pleasant autumn day, and Kitty, with her scarlet cloak over her shoulders, and a small hat perched upon her shining tresses, set forth to Miss Pearson's little store.

She had not proceeded far when she heard a great din, — shouts and cheers and much noise; while just ahead she saw a rabble of men and boys jeering and huzzahing. For a moment the little girl stood irresolute, but curiosity overmastered fear, and she raised herself on tiptoe to see what could be in the cart which was being dragged up street.

The crowd came surging on, and Kitty, seized with a panic, turned to run, and was hustled against a little girl about half her own age. The child came near to falling, and Kitty caught her by the arm to save her.

"Oh," said the child gratefully, "thee has saved me a fall; come, let us run. My house is close by, and this crowd is an evil one."

"What are they doing?" asked Kitty.

"They are riding a Tory through the streets. They

threaten to tar and feather him. I am scared, for my father has received ill-treatment. Come, let us run."

But the crowd was close upon them; apprentice boys in leather breeches and yarn stockings, serving women in linsey petticoats and short-gowns, joined those who cried, "Down with the Tories! Off with the rascal!"

Kitty clasped the little girl's hand in hers, and tried to push through the mob, but they were jostled from one side to another, till suddenly, a tall youth spied them, and, at the same moment Kitty's companion cried, "Thomas! Thomas! get us out of this."

The boy smiled down at her. "Ah, little Mary, is it thyself? How comest thou in this crowd?" Then elbowing his way along, and bidding the girls follow close behind him, he steadfastly made his way toward the corner.

"Oh!" Kitty breathed a sigh of relief. "'Tis good to get out of that, but I cannot get home yet."

"Come then with me," said Mary, "and Thomas will go with us, I am sure. This is Thomas Mendenhall, I am Mary Zane, and thou art — ?"

"Katherine De Witt. So now we all know each other."

"I will go to the door with thee, Mary, but not inside," said Thomas, smiling.

"But why?"

"Hast forgotten thy father likes not a fighting Quaker. I have been read out of meeting, and thy father is not only a Friend, but he favors the king, and frowns me down for being so bold as to want to fight for freedom."

"And have you done it?" exclaimed Kitty, joyfully.

"Something like it. I've just come off the brig *Nancy*, or what was once that good little ship."

"What has happened to her?"

"We had to blow her up to save her from falling into the hands of the enemy. But we saved the flag which my own hands made."

"Oh, tell us about it," begged Kitty.

"Since Thomas thinks he may not go in, we can sit here on the step," said Mary. "'Tis true, Thomas, my father likes not fighting Quakers, yet he himself was arrested for singing 'God save the King,' or at least he was with a company who sang it lustily. Yet I think he would harm no one, enemy or any other."

Kitty looked interested. "That is something which could never happen to my father," she said with a smile, "for he is in the Continental army."

"That is good," replied Thomas. "I tell thee 'tis hard to stay out when it seems a duty to go. My people were strenuous in urging upon me what a peace-loving Quaker should do, but—"

"You are not peace-loving," interrupted Kitty, laughing.

The lad's handsome dark eyes twinkled as he replied, "I'm not, when there's good cause for resistance."

"And you really made a flag. Tell us how it came about."

"Well, thee sees, I went to sea under Captain Hugh Montgomery, of the brig *Nancy*. We sailed under English colors for Porto Rico, and landed at Don Antonio Saronia to procure arms and ammunition from the Spanish. We had our cargo nearly made up, when we had word that independence was declared, and the Captain set me to work to make a flag from the description he gave me. This I did privately, and the *Nancy* was armed for defence. The day we set sail for a return voyage a big dinner was given to the governor and his friends, and as they were approaching in their barges, a salute of thirteen guns was fired, I was ordered to haul down the English flag, and up went our own American colors, for the first time, I believe, in a foreign port."

Thomas did not add that when almost within reach of home, a warning had been sent to the Captain that he must beware the enemy who was on the lookout for him, and that when he announced to his men his intention of defending his stores at all hazards, telling them

that a boat was ready to take ashore all who declined to fight for their country, the first to step forward was the sixteen year old lad, Thomas Mendenhall, whose simple, "Captain, I will stand by you," fired the crew with such enthusiasm that not one but what was ready to face danger. Thomas told nothing of this, and it was not till long afterward that Kitty heard of it.

The streets were quiet by the time Thomas had finished his story, and Kitty ran home with her crewels. It was many weeks before she saw little Mary Zane again.

It was near quaint old Bordentown that Aunt Joanna was staying; and since it was thought to be a perfectly safe place to send Kitty, for all was quiet in that direction, thither she went on the boat one pleasant day in November. The purple haze of Indian summer was over the land, and the soft-colored landscape on each side the Delaware showed warm tints in the sunshine.

Kitty thought it all very beautiful. She was glad to get to the country again, and glad that she was going to see her Jersey cousins; so she felt no dread as she stepped off the boat to be met by Aunt Joanna.

"Such a pretty place this is," said Kitty, as they

drove away from the landing toward the country. "What is that little stream, Aunt Joanna?"

"Crosswick's Creek. You shall have a fine time rowing upon it, but we must hasten on; our cousins are waiting for us. We have had glorious news this morning. And that reminds me, Kitty, I do not want you to get up an intimacy with the Gardner girls. They are your cousins, to be sure; but the family are all hot-headed Whigs, while cousin John Satterlee is a stanch partisan for the king. He is away on official business now, so you will probably not see him."

Kitty said nothing, but she kept her own counsel.

"Glorious news!" repeated Aunt Joanna. "The rebels are driven from their position at White Plains, and we have taken Fort Washington."

Still Kitty made no remark. She had learned long ago that it was not wise to argue with Aunt Joanna.

They were not long in reaching a pleasant house which overlooked the river. "Here is my little niece, Kitty," said Aunt Joanna to the lady who came out to meet them. "She professes to be a rebel like her father, but we'll have no treason here, will we?"

"Are they not good loyalists at Mrs. Rush's?" asked Cousin Cynthia, turning to Kitty with a smile.

"They are Tories, and they are very kind and good," replied Kitty.

"Well, my dear, come in. We shall try to make you have a good time. Do you like boating? And we shall soon be able to send you nutting. Our woods are full of chestnuts only waiting for a sharp frost to open them. You must gather all you can before the soldiers get here and get them. We don't grudge them, but we want our own supply first."

It was a perfect delight to Kitty to get out into the sweet-smelling woods during the Indian summer days which followed. The leaves, rustling under foot, sent forth a fine odor, as of wine; and, with her little cousin Herbert as sole companion, she had not felt so free in a long while. Later on, when frost came, and the prickly, brown chestnut-burrs were fully open, showing the shiny nuts inside, she and Herbert hastened out one fine afternoon and were soon busy filling their bags.

Kitty was bending over the leaves, stirring up the fallen burrs, when there was the sound of crackling branches; and, looking up, she saw a tall Hessian coming toward her, and another at a little distance.

Herbert took to his heels like a good fellow, and Kitty was inclined, at first, to drop her bag and follow him. Then she thought, "I'll do nothing of the

kind. It might only make him run after us both. I'll stand and face him."

The jager came striding up through the crisp, rustling leaves, and looked at Kitty's bag with a complacent smile. "*Gudt!*" he said. "*Mein, ja;*" and he reached out for the bag, which Kitty quickly put behind her.

The man laughed. "*Ja,*" he repeated, coming closer; and Kitty, seeing that discretion was the better part of valor, dropped the bag as the second soldier advanced nearer. The first one, seeing he could take the prize, let it lie on the ground, and asked, "*Vere lif Cardner?*"

Kitty shook her head. Then growing bolder, seeing the man had a pleasant face, "I am a stranger here."

The man in turn shook his head, and said a few words in German to his companion. Kitty, fortunately, understood, for had not her old nurse Lena been a German, and was she not herself of Dutch descent?

As she listened, it dawned upon her that he was hunting for an American soldier supposed to be concealed in the neighborhood. Oh, that she could warn him! She walked slowly along, wondering what she could do. The man picked up the bag and followed.

She was cudgelling her brains for some plan to mislead him. Suddenly she thought.

The red house of the Satterlee's could be seen through the trees. She beckoned to the man who had addressed her, and pointed to it. "Let Aunt Joanna and Cousin Cynthia take care of their friends," she thought, with a sudden humorous appreciation of the situation. "Let him carry them their chestnuts."

The man looked at her as if only half inclined to trust her; but she continued to nod and point to the red house, and presently he leaped the fence, followed by the other man, and across the fields Kitty saw them go.

"Now," she thought, "if I can only find the Gardners, and warn them in time. Let me see, which way is it? I must think." She made her way to the edge of the wood, and looked across the stretches of brown stubble. A curling wreath of smoke arose beyond the fields, from a substantial yellow house.

"That must be it; I'll risk it." And, hastily climbing the fence, she ran as fast as she could across the cornfield, between the piled up shocks of fodder, climbed another fence, and found herself in a stable yard. All was still. Only from the kitchen came the sound of a soft voice singing.

Kitty ran in without ceremony. "Oh, please tell me," she began to the astonished girl who confronted her, "is your name Gardner?"

"Yes, I am Cicely Gardner. Is anything wrong?"

"Yes, yes; the Hessians are coming. I am your cousin, Kitty De Witt. I am afraid they will get here before we can do anything. You have a soldier in hiding."

The girl's face went from red to white. She dropped her spoon, and ran out into the hall and up the steps, Kitty following.

At the head of the steps Cicely turned, panting. "Who told you? How did you find out? No one is at home but me. They have all gone to a funeral, grandmother and all."

"I was in the woods. The soldiers came to take away my chestnuts. They said you had a soldier here. They wanted to know where you lived. They spoke in German, but I understood." Her words came in jerks. "I put him off the track. I ran. He has gone to Cousin John Satterlee's, but there may be others also hunting. What can we do? What? What?" She wrung her hands, for precious moments were slipping away.

Cicely turned to the window and looked out. "They are coming! They are coming!" she whispered, her

voice shaking. And she turned to open the door of a room, into which she entered with Kitty, who saw, bolstered up in a chair, a young man, scarcely more than a boy. He was very pale, and turned his large eyes on the girls inquiringly. "They are coming! They are coming!" repeated Cicely, in a scared whisper.

The boy clutched the sides of the chair, and staggered to his feet.

Just then came a thought to Kitty. It was the mention of Cicely's grandmother which brought it. "Your grandmother, she is old, you said. Get some of her clothes and put on him," nodding toward the lad. "Quick! quick!"

Cicely darted out of the room, and came back with a pile of clothing on her arm. Quickly over the boy's head was thrown a dressing-gown; a shawl was wrapped around him.

There was a sound of knocking below.

"Go, go," said Kitty. "I'll finish." She clapped a cap upon the boy's head, fastened spectacles on his nose, turned the chair, with a whirl, away from the light, hung the remaining pieces of clothing over a chair, caught up a half-knitted stocking she espied on a table, and sat herself down with fear and trembling.

It was growing late, and the low-ceiled room was already in a half light, when three soldiers entered.

Kitty gave one quick look. To her great relief, the soldiers whom she had met in the woods were none of these. She pretended to be busy with her knitting, and, as the door closed, she said quietly, "Did you bring grandmother's broth, Cicely? I think it is time she had it." Then she rose to her feet as if just aware there were others present.

The men gazed around the room; looked at the figure huddled up in the big chair, with shawl around the ears. Then they punched the bed; they opened the closet door; they looked behind the curtains.

"Dat is gran'mudder?" asked one of the soldiers half curiously.

"Yes; she is very deaf and old," replied Kitty quickly, "and she has a bad cold. Please don't keep the door open any longer than you can help." And she pulled the shawl closer around the supposed grandmother's ears.

The men looked at each other and turned away. Kitty dropped her knitting, and clasped her hands in dread lest they should return. But they did not, and it was not many minutes before they were heard tramping off.

Even then the boy did not stir till Cicely made her appearance with a cup, and, in a voice shaking half with fright, half with amusement, she said, "Grandmother, will you have your broth now?"

CHAPTER V.

THE COURAGE OF HER CONVICTIONS.

THE tension was relieved by Cicely's words, and the three young persons burst out laughing. Then Cicely said, "But you do not know each other, Kitty. This is my cousin, Lloyd Holliday, of Maryland, and Lloyd, this is my cousin, Kitty De Witt, of New York."

"And if I mistake not," — said the lad, struggling to his feet, and holding on to an arm of the chair, while he bowed gravely. "If I mistake not, Miss Kitty, you have saved my life."

"Oh!" Kitty was embarrassed. "I only kept them from taking you prisoner."

"Which in my state would mean death," he returned. "Would you mind telling me how you happened to so opportunely be here to warn us?" And Kitty told her tale.

"How glad I am that you are not a Tory," Cicely said. "I wish you could stay here with us, instead of with your Aunt Joanna. She is, I fear, a sad

enemy to our cause. Suppose she should hear of this. Oh, Kitty, you will not tell why you came."

"Not I," returned Kitty stoutly. "Still I think it would be well if Master Holliday could be removed to some unsuspected spot, since the enemy seems to have heard rumors of his being here."

"And his wound is not yet healed," returned Cicely, thoughtfully.

"His wound? Is he then wounded? I thought him perhaps but recovering from a fever. Have you been in a battle, Master Holliday?"

He smiled. "It was my good fortune to be in the battle of Long Island."

"He belongs to Smallwood's Flying Column," put in Cicely. "And you know how bravely they fought."

"Indeed I do. And shall you return when you are well?" she asked, turning to Lloyd.

"It is my intention; but meantime, the country is full of Hessians, and I almost fear I shall find a difficulty in getting to my regiment. However, I shall trust to luck, which, so far, has not deserted me; and since I have two such guardian angels as you, Miss Kitty, and your cousin Cicely, I shall surely expect to elude evil. And now, Cousin Cicely, if you will permit me, I will take that good broth."

A little rippling laugh came from Cicely. "You

look so funny, Lloyd, in that cap, you may as well take it off, and give me the spectacles. My grandmother is very choice of them, for they are the new kind which slips behind the ears. My father got them for a present to grandmother; and take off the gown, too, Lloyd, for the soldiers must be safely away by this."

"And I, too, must be going. See how dark it is getting," said Kitty.

"No, no, it will not do for you to go forth alone at such a time," Cicely remonstrated. "Father will be here soon, and will see you safely to Cousin Satterlee's door."

"I would I were privileged to be your escort, Miss Kitty," interposed Lloyd; "'twould give me much pleasure."

"I'll take the will for the deed, and —"

"Perhaps some other time I may be so favored," Lloyd finished the sentence. "I shall not forget you, Miss Kitty; be sure of that."

The sound of wheels interrupted the colloquy, and the two girls ran downstairs to greet the returned family.

"So this is Kitty De Witt," Mrs. Gardner said, giving her a hearty kiss. "I knew your father well when we were boy and girl, and Joanna too; is she as great a spitfire as ever? I was afraid we should

not see anything of you, for we know the Satterlees do not approve of us."

"Any more than we do of them," put in Mr. Gardner.

"We heard you were in the neighborhood," said the old grandmother, looking up at Kitty with her bright old eyes.

And then Cicely told of the afternoon's adventures, while all listened attentively. "How quick-witted you are," said a pretty, dark-eyed girl, who had not spoken before.

Kitty looked at her and smiled. These people pleased her.

"I am Phebe," said the girl, answering the smile, "and your cousin, too."

"Don't you wish we could keep her?" said Cicely.

"I wish we could. Can't you stay?"

Kitty shook her head. "They are worrying about me now, I suppose, and I really ought to have been back before."

"Then I'll take you at once, before I put up the horses," Mr. Gardner volunteered.

"But do stay to supper, we'll soon have it ready," begged the girls.

But Kitty was positive that she ought to go, and was sustained in her decision by Mr. Gardner.

"We'll come and see you, whether we are wanted or not," said the girls. "And you must come over whenever you get a chance."

"I'll make one," returned Kitty. "And if I find there's anything going on that you ought to know, I'll find a way to tell you."

Aunt Joanna was in her most irate mood when Kitty reached John Satterlee's. The sound of wheels brought the expectant lady out on the porch. She did not vouchsafe a word to good Hiram Gardner, to whom Kitty was warmly expressing her thanks for his escort. Aunt Joanna cut her short by saying: —

"This is a pretty time for you to be getting home, miss. Here, right into the house as straight as you can go." And she marched her off in the midst of her adieux. "A nice trick you tried to play on us," she went on. "There, don't try to deny it. Herbert saw you parleying. What did you mean by sending those two soldiers here and telling them this was Hiram Gardner's?"

"I didn't tell them. I never said a word."

But Aunt Joanna in her rages was not to be pacified by contradictions, and this occasion was one which aroused her strongest resentment. "Well, whether you did or not, you misled them. Nevertheless, they found out that we were friends. It is a good thing

that old Lena did not let us forget our Dutch, for that made me able to make them understand; and they were well pleased at hearing me speak. Moreover, we treated them well, and told them what they wanted to know so far as we could, promising to find out more. Stand there in front of me." And Aunt Joanna established herself on a high-backed chair, placing Kitty before her.

"Give an account of yourself. Where have you been? Pretty doings! for my brother's daughter to be tramping about a country full of soldiers. You needn't look so mulish; speak up." But Kitty answered never a word.

Aunt Joanna lowered her high key a little. She knew of old that Kitty could be obstinate when she chose.

"There, Kitty," she said, "it is too bad to mar your visit with such unpleasantness, but I must do my duty. However, I'll be very lenient with you. Tell me but one thing, and I'll say no more. Have they any one in hiding at the Gardners'? You may as well tell, for I shall notify Major von Blum tomorrow that they'd better give the place an overhauling, for I know the people are rebels, out and out; and your keeping silence can do no good."

But not a word did Kitty answer, and her aunt's

fury rose again. "Well, miss, if you choose to be so close mouthed, I'll find a way to make you use your tongue. Here, — No, no, Cynthia," as Mrs. Satterlee, who had come in, began to intercede for Kitty, by saying, —

"Now, Joanna, the child has come to make a pleasant visit; why make a point of this?"

"She shall find out who she's dealing with," returned Aunt Joanna, grasping Kitty's shoulder so she winced. "I am ashamed of you, Katherine De Witt! to make such a disturbance in a house where you are visiting, and where you have only received kindness," she said, as she led the unresisting girl upstairs. "Now," she continued, as she reached Kitty's apartment, "in your room you stay till you can find that you have tongue enough to show me some respect. And if you do not come to your senses by to-morrow, back you go to Philadelphia, in short order, and I wash my hands of you." Then, shutting the door with a bang, turning the key with a snap, Aunt Joanna left Kitty alone.

But the girl was not in the least afraid. She was in the room adjoining that occupied by her aunt, and would not feel unprotected at night. She was only rather hungry, and wished now that matters had so turned out that she could have stayed to supper

with the Gardners. She wondered if Cousin Cynthia would let her go hungry, if she would think of her not having had anything to eat since noon. And because, to one of Kitty's age, the question of being hungry or satisfied is one of great importance, this occupied her thoughts for some time.

After a while she softly opened her window, hoping to be able to call to some one below. Cousin Cynthia had several negro servants, and one of them might be passing under the window. It was chilly, and Kitty wrapped her cloak about her as she leaned out over the broad window-sill.

Her watching was, after some moments, rewarded by a sight of little Herbert, who was running across from the porch to the wood-house. She liked the little fellow, and believed she could depend upon him. So she called softly, "Herbert, Herbert!"

He stopped and looked around. "Look up to my window," she said, and he turned his smiling face upward. "Herbert," she said, leaning out as far as she could, "I am so hungry. Aunt Joanna has locked me in. Can't you get me something to eat, or listen — go tell Drusy to come out. Don't tell any one else."

Herbert nodded emphatically and ran toward the kitchen, from which Drusy's fat form presently issued.

Kitty made known her request; and after some planning, she arranged to let down a string, and so drew up the food with which Drusy willingly supplied her, chuckling to herself as she tied the little basket to the twisted yarn which Kitty lowered.

All this took some time, but at last, having satisfied her physical needs, the prisoner's thoughts drifted in other directions. She would not betray the young Marylander, no, not if she were to be shut up forever. She decided that, and was sitting hugging her knees on the foot of her high, four-poster bed, when she heard her aunt with Mrs. Satterlee enter the next room.

"I had no idea it was bedtime," said Kitty. "That comes of having so late a supper. I'd better go to bed myself, or I'll have Aunt Joanna in here to carry off my candle and make me tumble in without a light," and she jumped down from the bed.

Passing near the door she heard her aunt say: "I think we'd best not wait for Major von Blum to call, Cynthia. It seems to me it would be better to ride to Bordentown to-morrow, and say to him, first thing, that it would be well not to delay in searching the Gardners' house. They're not likely to suspect a searching party to-night, but they may get off their man early in the morning."

"You're rather vindictive, aren't you, Joanna?" said Mrs. Satterlee.

"I know my duty to my king and my country," answered Aunt Joanna, tartly. "If we were all such soft-hearted and supine creatures as to spare every rebel who chooses to impose upon us, the country would soon be ruined. If they are to be brought to their senses, it will be by making an example of a few of them."

"But we are not sure that the Gardners are harboring a rebel," still persisted Mrs. Satterlee.

"Then no harm will be done if he isn't found there," returned Aunt Joanna, grimly. "But one thing is sure, Kitty goes back to-morrow. There's no telling into what sort of trouble we shall be embroiled, if she persists in following up those Gardner girls. Back she goes to-morrow, and I will take her to the boat myself."

"Now, Joanna, you are too hard on her. She is a nice child." The listening Kitty felt her heart go out gratefully to Cousin Cynthia.

"One must not let one's personal feeling stand in the way of one's duty," replied Aunt Joanna, coldly. "I know Kitty better than you do, Cynthia. She possesses a dogged persistence there is no overcoming, gentle as she seems, and there is no knowing

what she will undertake. She will be safer in Philadelphia."

Mrs. Satterlee did not pursue the subject, and after both she and Aunt Joanna were asleep, Kitty lay awake trying to contrive some plan by which she could warn the Gardners of the threatening danger. But no practical means suggested itself, and she finally dropped off into slumber, not to awaken till her aunt's voice roused her.

"Come, Kitty, get your things together. You are going back to-day; that is, unless you can promise to be more obedient than you were last night." Kitty's sleepy eyes opened more widely as she sat up staring at her aunt. Slowly the events of the previous day came before her, and she compressed her lips before she replied, "Very well, Aunt Joanna; I am ready to go back if you say so."

"You are an obstinate child if ever there was one," returned Aunt Joanna. Kitty had slid out of the high bed, and was sitting on the floor, putting on her shoes and stockings. "Aunt Joanna," she said, "I know what my father would have me do. The Bible says, 'Children, obey your parents;' it doesn't say anything about aunts."

Aunt Joanna's eyes snapped. "It tells you to be in subjection to those placed over you."

Kitty paused in the act of fastening her shoe, doubtful for a moment. "But parents come first," she returned, triumphantly, "I know they do."

"I suppose, then, if your father told you to kill some one, you'd think it right to do it, eh?"

"No, and it isn't any more right when my aunt tells me to help some one to his death," replied Kitty, getting up.

Aunt Joanna turned away without another word. The shaft told, but it made her only the more determined to get her niece away. "The child is getting beyond me," she confessed to herself.

Cousin Cynthia loaded Kitty's plate with good things at breakfast. "You poor child," she whispered. "I hate to have you go. I feel as if you had had such a very unsatisfactory time that you will never want to come again."

Kitty smiled up gratefully, although she was very heavy-hearted as the time drew near, and she saw no prospect of sending a message to her friends. She half determined to confide in Cousin Cynthia, but she was afraid it might not be the best thing to do, for it would involve an acknowledgment of Lloyd's presence at the Gardners'. And so the moments fled, and the time came for her departure.

"I am going to drive the chaise into Bordentown,"

Cousin Cynthia announced. "I think we can all three squeeze into it. I have some things to see about; so, Joanna, if you are determined upon going, we two will take the seat, and Kitty can be stowed in either in front or behind."

Therefore, before long the old white horse was jogging along, Kitty stowed away in front, and her baggage behind.

They had gone about a mile, when Kitty, who was very uncomfortable both mentally and physically, was relieved to hear her aunt say: "I declare, Cynthia, my feet are going to sleep with Kitty crowding them so close. Suppose you get in at the back and sit on your portmanteau for a while, Kitty. You can let your feet hang out, and we'll all be less cramped."

Kitty obediently took the place assigned her, and the horse jogged on. Suddenly a thought came to the girl, and her heart beat so fast that she imagined the two chatting together so unconcernedly must hear the quick thumps. She looked eagerly from one side to another. They were coming to a little hill. Here was her chance; as soon as they reached the top and came to that bend before Billy started up his jog-trot.

Carefully, carefully, she let her feet swing nearer

and nearer the ground, and before Billy fairly stopped his slow walk, she had touched the ground and, with a sudden dart, crouched low and reached a tree behind which she hid. She gave a great sigh of relief to see that the chaise did not stop. She was not missed yet. The couple in the vehicle had not looked back. A little more and the brow of the hill would hide her completely, as they journeyed down the other side of it. She must not let her scarlet cloak be seen. She slipped it off and rolled it up, holding it in front of her, as she crept along the road down hill.

It was early yet, and the white frost sparkled on the bronzed leaves under foot. A partridge, once in a while, started up with a whirring sound, or a Molly Cottontail leaped from her covert of brambles. Faster and faster Kitty sped on till she came to the foot of the hill, and here she must take to the field. Her brown frock would not betray her at a distance, but one single flash of scarlet would; and so, lifting her skirt, she fastened the cloak under it, and then, climbing the fence, she dropped down into the field and ran toward the yellow house in the clump of trees beyond.

Safe! Safe! Yes, she was sure of it. Old Billy could not overtake her now, even if the chaise should

be turned back, and, in any case, time had been gained.

She reached the house, and there was no sign of the chaise, so she took time to get breath before she made her way to the kitchen she had entered so hastily the day before. Phebe and Cicely were both there. The hum of a spinning-wheel came from the next room. All was as quiet as if an army of British were not pouring into Jersey.

"Why, Kitty! Kitty!" cried the two girls, dropping the apples they were paring; "you have come over soon again."

"No bad news, I hope," said Cicely, anxiously.

Kitty dropped into a chair. "Oh, but there is!" she said; "there is! and I have come to tell you." And she began her story.

"Wait a minute," said Phebe. "Mother must hear. Come into the next room." And before the wheel had stopped its drone, Kitty had made them aware of her errand.

"You dear, brave child," Mrs. Gardner said, when the story was ended, "you are right. There is not a moment to lose. Call your father quick, Phebe. And Cicely, you run up — no — we will wait to hear what your father says."

Mr. Gardner came hurrying in from the barn.

"We'll have to strike out lively, mother," he said, "if we're to get that boy off across the river. I'll go down and get the boat ready, and you girls put us up a lunch. Stir around. There's not a moment to lose."

"Don't you think—" began Kitty.

Mr. Gardner looked at her sharply. "What is it?"

"Wouldn't it be better if you were to dress him up in girl's clothes, so if any one saw you, they'd think you had one of your daughters with you?"

"Not a bad idea. See to it, mother, will you?" And within half an hour a little boat shot out into the Delaware.

Phebe had begged to go that she might lend a hand to the rowing; and those who saw them beheld nothing unusual in the Gardner girls and their father going to Jim Gardner's, across the river.

CHAPTER VI.

AT THE FARMHOUSE.

MEANWHILE Kitty's escape had been discovered. "Goodness! do you suppose she has fallen out?" said Mrs. Satterlee. "That is a pretty steep hill, and if she didn't hold on tight, she might have lost her balance."

They stopped and called. Then Aunt Joanna got out and walked back to the brow of the hill; but there was no scarlet heap lying in the middle of the road. "She's jumped out on purpose," was Aunt Joanna's report. "Drive on, Cynthia."

Grimly she gave her information to the Hessian major. "Don't be deceived," she warned him. "Hiram Gardner has a wife, two daughters, and an old mother. If your men see any one else, unless my niece happens to be there, they'll see more persons than they ought, that's all."

And therefore when, an hour later, two whiskered Hessians galloped to the Gardners' house, and went clattering boisterously from room to room, they saw

just what had been seen the day before; an old grandmother sitting by her fire, a fair-haired girl opposite, with her knitting, the same slender maiden who had led them upstairs, and her buxom mother, whom it would be farcical to suspect of masculinity. One of the men leaned down to look closely into Grandmother Gardner's face; but her wrinkles were too genuine to be suspected. And the men galloped away again, their chagrin at finding no prisoner almost balanced by their satisfaction in believing they had made no mistake the day before.

Mr. Gardner and Phebe did not return till the next day, and then they brought the reassuring news that Lloyd was safe within the house of James Gardner.

"Uncle James was glad enough to shelter him," Phebe told them; "and we think Lloyd was made none the worse by his journey."

But Mr. Gardner wore so grave a countenance that Kitty feared there might be something wrong, after all; and later in the day Mrs. Gardner sighed so often, and her usually cheerful face wore so deep a gloom, that Kitty wondered what could be the matter.

Not a sign of Aunt Joanna. She had evidently concluded to leave Kitty to her own devices. "I hope she'll not come for you at all," Cicely said, "and then we can keep you all winter."

But Kitty looked grave. She was not altogether satisfied at being entirely ignored, even though Cicely was merry company.

That night when the two girls were cuddled down in the big feather bed, a little sniffling sound from Cicely told Kitty that her cousin was crying. She snuggled up close, and put her arms around her bed-fellow. "What's the matter?" she whispered.

"Oh, Kitty! I never knew till bed-time what has made father so solemn all day, and why mother has seemed so worried. There is dreadful news from our army. General Washington is in retreat. Many of his men have left him because their term of enlistment is over, and father thinks it looks very dark for the patriots. He says the poor soldiers are almost naked. There has been an appeal for more troops, and —" and here Cicely's feelings overcame her, and she sobbed outright — "father's going."

Kitty patted her gently. "Don't cry, Cicely; don't cry. Why, my father has been gone ever so long, and I'm proud of it. And Elspeth Ludlow has both a father and a brother in the army, and she is as glad as need be. If we are real true patriots we must not cry; we must be brave, too, and that helps. Father says the women of New England did so much by encouraging their men, and so we must try to do as much."

"Oh, Kitty!" Cicely grew quieter. "I am so glad you are here. I will try to be brave, but it is all dreadful, isn't it?"

"Of course; but tell me, who said your father was going?"

"Phebe. She says father and Uncle James talked it all over. She says they both felt that they must go, because men are flocking home now that their time is up, and the few that are left are in great straits, and that 'most every one thinks the cause is lost."

"It isn't! It isn't!" Kitty clinched her fists fiercely. "Oh, Cicely! I wish I were a man, I'd go. How dreadful for the men to be such laggards. I am so glad my own dear father is true and brave, and I'm glad yours is."

Thus comforted, Cicely felt more content at her father's going, and when the next day Mr. Gardner left his family, Kitty, with shining eyes, bade him good-by, and sent messages to her father, if by chance Mr. Gardner should see him.

And then Cicely, with tears rolling down her cheeks, smiled, as she ran down to open the gate toward which her father was slowly riding. "God speed you, father," she said. "We're proud of you, Kitty and I are." And there was a smile, too, on Mr. Gardner's face as

he rode away, thinking that of all his family it was the youngest who was the bravest.

And now the country was overrun with soldiers, and terror lay in the hearts of those who dared by word or deed to show sympathy with the American cause. Dreadful deeds were constantly perpetrated by the invading army, and the word Hessian became a synonym for cruelty.

"John Tucker tells me he will accept the offer of pardon which is held out to those who choose to return to England's allegiance," announced Phebe at the supper table, on the day Mr. Gardner left home. There was a curl of scorn on the girl's lips, and her delicate nostrils dilated as she gave her head a little toss.

"Why, daughter!" exclaimed Mrs. Gardner.

"Oh, he's not the only one," declared Phebe, lightly. "The people are tumbling over each other in their eagerness to subscribe to submission, if one may judge by what our neighbors say. We shall soon be the only patriots left in New Jersey, and will have to fight the redcoats entirely by ourselves." There was a tinge of bitterness in her laugh, as she laid her left hand down upon the table that all might see that the little ring which John Tucker had given her was missing.

"Oh, Phebe!" whispered Cicely, "you've given back your ring."

Phebe flashed on her a proud glance. "Do you suppose I care?" she said. "Do you suppose I'd wed a traitor, a turncoat, a weathercock in men's clothes?" And then she jumped up from the table and fled from the room.

"Poor, dear child," murmured Mrs. Gardner, "she has a heavy trial to bear."

But Phebe carried her head high, and rebuffed any attempt at condolence, only once she said to her mother, "If he had died in battle I should have mourned him, but I could be proud of him; now he is dead to me, but 'twould be to my shame to mourn him. But I can be proud of father," she added, seeing the distressed look on her mother's face. And she turned to her work, humming a little tune, as if it mattered not much, after all.

Mr. Gardner's departure left the family with plenty to do. They were such avowed patriots that they would hire no enemies to their cause, and employed only the services of a little boy that they might save more for their friends in the army. Kitty was instructed in many useful directions; she and Cicely took the butter-making upon themselves, and with a big checked apron under her chin, Kitty worked the dasher of the big churn up and down, triumphant when the butter gathered under her efforts. She helped Cicely

in tending the stock and in milking, so that her presence was one which would have been missed if she had left her cousins.

At the end of a week came news from Mr. Gardner. He was with the army. They had crossed the Delaware to the Pennsylvania side. He had seen both Lloyd and Captain De Witt. Lloyd intended to reenlist as soon as he should be well enough. It was not easy to get news, for the Hessians were everywhere, and the Tories were greatly in evidence spying and helping on the work of despoiling property. Moreover, in his retreat, Washington had broken down the bridges on the roads leading along the Jersey shore. Mr. Gardner's messenger did not show his face, but gave the letter into the hands of the little stable boy, and disappeared without a word, and it was not till long after that any of the family learned who he was.

"Do your best with the stock," Mr. Gardner wrote, "and try to be as quiet and unobtrusive as possible. These are dangerous times, and I am in fear and trembling for your safety."

"We don't do anything to injure any one. None could be more peaceable. There are no men about, and surely they will not want to fight women," said Cicely confidently.

"But it is just when one feels safest that danger is

often near, and these are dark, dark hours," said Mrs. Gardner. She looked troubled, and every now and then glanced out of the window as if fearing some terror from without. But the days passed quietly till the time drew near to Christmas. Every little while reports of what was being done by the Hessians or the British came to the ears of those in the quiet farmhouse, but, so far, they had been unmolested. Active patriotism seemed almost a forgotten quality, only in the hearts of a few did its fires burn brightly, and these few chafed and despaired, groaning in spirit when they heard the words of derision for the "ragged rebels," who had been driven across Jersey and were now posted on the other side of the river.

Rall, the Hessian Colonel, was stationed at Trenton; Von Donop at Bordentown. Congress had adjourned to Baltimore. There was a panic in Philadelphia, for it was expected the British would invade that city without delay, and those who were not of the loyalist party were removing their goods and chattels, and getting out of town as fast as they could.

Kitty wondered and wondered why no news came from her family. She was without even a change of clothing, and had to depend upon her cousins to supply her. This they were more than willing to do, but the little girl felt uneasy and longed to hear some-

thing of the mother who had grown so near and dear to her in these months.

"Your Aunt Joanna is in a high feather," Mrs. Gardner told Kitty. "I hear that she is in Bordentown, and that one of the Hessian officers shows her much favor."

"And she doesn't know nor care what has become of me. She is a strange person, is Aunt Joanna, she is so fierce and peppery; and yet I think she used to love me well, but she cannot bear that any one should thwart her. I wish she would send my clothing to me, or that I could hear from my father and mother. I fear my mother has never received the letter I wrote her."

"Art homesick, little Kitty?" said Mrs. Gardner, stepping back from her spinning-wheel.

Kitty shook her head. "I am much more content here than I could be with my aunt, but I wish this dreadful war were over, and I again in our dear home in New York. Christmas is coming near, and we used to make much of it, after the fashion of our Dutch ancestors. This year 'twill be gloomy enough for us all."

"It will, I fear. We grow poorer and poorer, with this soldiery preying constantly upon us."

"I hear," said Phebe, coming in, "that Lord Corn-

wallis has threatened to burn the handsome house of the Bordens, but promised to spare it if Mrs. Borden would persuade her husband and son to desert to the British side."

"And what did she say?" asked Kitty.

"That she would rejoice to see her home in flames, if so it would be prevented from falling into the hands of the British."

Kitty softly clapped her hands. "Good!" she exclaimed.

It was growing dark, and the fire, flickering in the great fireplace, made fantastic shadows in the corners of the big room. The soft whirr of the wheel, and the ticking of the tall clock, added to the cosiness of the homely scene. It seemed very quiet and peaceful, and yet how near was war and destruction.

Kitty, from her place on the settle, saw a wavering shadow at the window. Was it cast by the branches of the tree outside? Suddenly it disappeared. Kitty watched, half-curious, a little afraid.

Phebe left the kitchen to take her grandmother's supper. Cicely was in the buttery. Mrs. Gardner had stepped into the next room, when Kitty heard a tap-tapping at the small-paned window. Fearfully she went toward it. A hand waved her toward the door, and afraid to obey the summons, yet fearing not to,

she went to the door. A figure of a man shrouded in a cloak thrust a paper into her hand, and instantly he was gone.

Kitty was still looking wonderingly at the paper, when Mrs. Gardner returned. "What a draught of cold air," she remarked. "Ah me! 'tis a bitter winter. Our poor men! our poor men! What have you there that you stare at so, Kitty?" And the girl told her what had happened.

Mrs. Gardner took the paper, which read: "Be on your guard. If possible, get away from the neighborhood. The British will not be long in sending a foraging party, who will rob you of what is left you."

"What does this mean? Who could have brought it! It seems a feigned hand, and yet half familiar," Mrs. Gardner said. "I wish I knew if it were but a threat or a real warning." But, intending to be on the safe side, she sent the little herd of cattle next morning to the woods; and not long after a body of horsemen came galloping into the yard. They made a tour of the barn and outhouses, took off all the corn not concealed, and then advanced toward the house.

"You have a spy here," said the foremost, as he strode into the kitchen.

"Indeed we have not," replied Cicely, indignantly.

"Cease your clatter, wench," said the man threat-

eningly. "Watch her, men, and search the house. Here, no running off to apprise your wretched rebel spy," as Kitty moved toward the door. "Guard this one, Kirchmer. Once we find our man, we'll hang him high as Haman." And, flinging open doors, the men began their search, coolly appropriating anything to which they took a fancy.

"But we have no one concealed," Mrs. Gardner insisted.

"We know better; you are a set of rebels, and one of your ilk was hanging around last night. We have tracked his footprints on the snow to the house."

"Oh!" Kitty gasped.

"Out with it. Give him up, and we will leave you."

"I do not know. Some one whom I could not distinguish did come last night and left a billet for Mrs. Gardner; but he went away again directly. I know not in what direction."

She was evidently speaking the truth, and the officer looked puzzled.

"Where is the note?"

"It was of a personal nature, and is burned," replied Mrs. Gardner calmly.

"Go out and examine those footprints, and see where they disappear," the officer ordered one of his men.

The soldier obeyed, and returned, saying they ended

at the house. But all searching availed nothing; and the officer, with his men, enraged at their failure to find whom they sought, slashed their swords right and left into whatever came in their way, and departed with their plunder after many threats of what they would do to the man they wanted, once they had captured him.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW KITTY DEFIED THE REDCOATS.

THE next morning early, just as Kitty and Cicely had finished milking, and were about to drive the cows to their retreat in the woods, they heard the sound of approaching soldiers.

The two girls looked at each other, and ran to the fence of the field through which the cattle were slowly moving.

"Oh, they are going to take our cattle, I am afraid," said Cicely in dismay.

"Don't let's allow it," said Kitty, fiercely.

"How can we help it, just we two girls?"

"We can go drive the cattle up, and then, maybe, they won't come after them."

"Oh, would you dare do it?"

Kitty nodded, and Cicely, not to be outdone, began to let down the bars, calling the big collie dog from the house step. He came bounding and barking toward them. "Go for them, Don, go!" cried Cicely, and at the same time she and Kitty ran forward.

"Stop there, or we'll fire," came from the road, where the body of soldiers had halted.

"Fire, if you will," cried Kitty, defiantly. "It would show great bravery."

"Don't let them get away, Don," called Cicely, and the brave dog rushed around and rounded up his herd in fine style.

Again the men shouted: "Leave those cattle, or we'll fire!"

Again Kitty turned from driving a refractory cow which didn't want to go into the barnyard. "Fire, if you came to shoot down girls," she retorted; and the bullets began to fly, while Don tried in vain to keep the terrified cattle in a bunch.

Presently the dog gave a sharp yelp, and fell, then rose again and limped toward Cicely, who, in her terror and at sight of Don's wound, was almost beside herself.

And now one after another of the soldiers came through the gap which they had made in the fence. They had stopped firing, and, indeed, had not intended to hit any one.

"Take Don to the house, and I'll drive up the cattle the rest of the way," cried Kitty, for the first of the creatures had gone through the bars, and the others were following at a frightened, clumsy gallop.

Cicely led Don along as well as she could, but one shot was fired after them. It struck the barn and glanced off; but Kitty began furtively to wipe a stain of blood from her face as she put up the bars and stood, a courageous, undaunted little figure, white as death, but with a red stream trickling down her cheek. Her blue eyes flashed, her fair hair, loosened from its braids, floated down her back. She spread her arms wide across the bars and faced the first redcoat who came toward her. "What will you have?" she asked shrilly. "What do you want?"

"We don't want to hurt pretty girls," replied the young officer, impudently. Then, seriously, "Why, you are hit — I didn't intend —" A flush of shame came over his face.

"I suppose you intended to fight women, since there are no men about," replied Kitty, mockingly. "What a brave set you are, to be sure. Twenty, are you? big brave men against two little girls! That's valor for you. I congratulate George Third on the quality of his troops!"

The officer looked at her in silence. Then he turned away and gave the order to march. At the gap in the fence he looked back to see a little figure still standing with arms across the bars; and she did not budge till the last redcoat was out of sight.

Repeated calls came to her from the house, but she heeded them not; and finally Mrs. Gardner came out to her.

"They are gone — really gone!" she exclaimed. "And — why, Kitty, child, you are hurt!"

Kitty looked at her in a dazed sort of way, and dropped in a little heap on the ground.

When she opened her eyes, she was lying on a settle in the big kitchen, Don, with his leg bound up, on the hearth beside her, Mrs. Gardner and the girls anxiously bending over her, — one chafing her hands, another bathing her forehead, and a third moving burnt feathers before her nostrils.

"There, she is opening her eyes," Cicely said with satisfaction. "Are you much hurt, Kitty?"

Kitty smiled. "No, I am not hurt at all, am I? It was Don."

"The bullet just grazed her temple," said Mrs. Gardner. "It isn't at all a deep wound, but it will leave a little scar, I am afraid."

"Oh, will it?" said Kitty, trying to sit up. "Then I can show it to Elspeth and to father. I'm so glad."

Every one laughed, but Mrs. Gardner, checking herself, said gravely, "It came within a hair's-breadth of being your death, Kitty. You had a great deliver-

ance. All the cattle in the world were not worth your life. You should not have been so very, very defiant."

"But we saved the cattle," said Cicely exultantly, "although dear old Don is wounded. But I think he will get over it. There seem to be no bones shattered, and we have sent Joe for old Moses Farrell, the horse doctor. Oh, Kitty, I thought you were dead when mother brought you in. Weren't you fearfully scared when those bullets began to fly? I was, and indeed, I didn't mean to leave you out there alone. I didn't know just what I was doing; and when you told me to bring Don to the house, I simply brought him."

"That was exactly right," replied Kitty. "One girl against all those soldiers was a little too great odds, even for a redcoat, and I believe they were shamed out of their intention by my facing them. Father always used to tell me when I was little, and used to be afraid in the dark, that the best way was to face whatever frightened me, and in time I would overcome my fears. So I learned to do it, and am afraid of few things now. I used to be afraid even of cows."

"Well, you certainly were not to-day," laughed Cicely.

"Oh, I was, but I wouldn't let myself be a coward."

"Only a cow herd," returned Cicely, again dimpling.

"There! there! have done with your paltry jokes, Cissy," Mrs. Gardner enjoined. "Kitty looks quite weak and pale. We ought all to be in safer parts. There, Kitty, dear, don't cry; you shall not be harmed if I can help it," for now the reaction having set in, Kitty was crying hysterically.

"Hark!" cried Cicely, suddenly.

"Oh! is it the soldiers coming back?" inquired Kitty, raising herself on her elbow, looking very pale under her bandages.

There was a sound of wheels; some vehicle stopped at the door, and all looked at each other in terror. Was this some new disaster?

Cicely answered the rap which was heard at the door of the next room; but there was no tramp of heavy boots, nor the clank of swords. Instead, Kitty heard the swish of silks, and a little cry of pity and love, as the door opened, and, with hands outstretched, her mother came running toward her, dropping on her knees by the settle, and murmuring, "My little girl! My dear little daughter!"

Pretty Mistress De Witt, in her handsome gown, her gorgeous quilted petticoat, and her rich cloak, was an unexpected and unusual figure in the country kitchen, and Kitty, beyond her joy, was very proud

of this lovely young mother, who petted her and murmured comforting words to her.

"My poor little poppet! my little lambkin! what a wretched mother am I to have allowed you to go so far from me, and to get into all this trouble. Why is your head bound up, and why are you so pale, lambie?"

And then Cicely spoke up and told of Kitty's adventure, while Mrs. De Witt turned red and white by turns.

"The miscreants!" she exclaimed, clinching her hands, "the cowards, to fire on a defenceless girl! I shall tell some of their fine generals what I think of them. Are you able to travel, my love? A poor sort of a guardian is that aunt of yours — oh" — she stopped, blushing. "Oh, I beg your pardon," she said; "I meant no reproach to you who have been my Kitty's best friends; what would she have done but for your kindness. You have all shown such goodness to my little lambkin, and she has shown herself to be a brave daughter of a brave father, who will add his thanks to mine for your sweet hospitality." Her words and her manner were so gracious that the girls fell in love with her then and there.

"Don't take me to Aunt Joanna," begged Kitty wistfully.

"Indeed no! To Philadelphia will we go, as straight as we can make it. Where is Christopher? He would come with us, whether or no, and now let us bundle off, and you can tell me all that has been going on. How did I happen to find you? I had not heard from you in so long a time I became anxious, and started to hunt up your Aunt Joanna, who told me of your escape from her. Why did you not trust your mother, and write to her of your plight?"

"But I did," Kitty told her.

"Never a word have I heard," Mrs. De Witt assured her.

A little later, therefore, snugly tucked in by Christopher, anxious and solicitous, Kitty drove away with her mother in the sleigh which the snowy roads made possible to use. There were promises of frequent letters from Phebe and Cicely, and oft-repeated goodbys, but Kitty, as she took her departure, felt that after all patriotism had few benefits to bestow, compared to the luxuries which awaited her in the Tory household to which she was returning. She was weak and faint, and her wounded head ached badly. The long journey, although made as rapidly and as comfortably as possible, seemed tedious. Her hands were hot, and she did not feel inclined to talk much, but only answered the questions put to her.

It was after night when they reached Philadelphia, and drew up before Mrs. Rush's door.

"I've brought you a sick little girl, I'm afraid, Lavinia," said Mrs. De Witt. And, indeed, Kitty, coming into the warm room out of the cold, saw dancing andirons, wavering sconces, and reeling chairs and tables, and she sank down in a faint, the second time in her experience.

"Poor little love," said good-hearted Mrs. Rush. "Carry her right upstairs, Christopher." And unconscious little Kitty was borne up the stairway in Christopher's arms, and deposited safely in her mother's room, where warming-pans, and blankets, hot drinks, and such things were brought into requisition, and at last she fell asleep. But all through the night she gave little starts and moans, crying out, "I won't be afraid, father! I'll try not!"

"Oh, how have I betrayed my husband's trust," whispered Mrs. De Witt, with wet eyes. "He gave her to me to care for, and how have I been false to her. I have let her go from me into such danger — and oh, Lavinia, where is my husband this winter night?"

It was on Mrs. Rush's tongue to say, "Where you might have expected him to be when you married a rebel," but her sister's distress was too genuine, and she, herself, was too tender-hearted to twit her; there-

fore she tried to offer comfort by saying, "No doubt Paul is comfortably quartered, and as for Kitty, she will be all right in the morning; if not we will send for the doctor."

But Kitty was not better, and it was many weeks before she left her bed.

On Christmas night, when her father, facing the storm of snow and sleet, crossed with Washington the ice-filled Delaware to surprise the Hessians at Trenton next morning, Kitty was still murmuring, "I won't be afraid, father!" and her father little knew that, despite storm and stress, despite the hazard of battle, he was safer than his young daughter, whose feet seemed slipping down into darker waters than those through which he was passing that Christmas night of 1776.

But just after dawn, when the gallant troops of General Washington found a footing on the Jersey shore, after their night of desperate struggle, just then did Kitty, too, find her way up from the Valley of Shadow, and her faint little voice said, "Father!" Then she looked around and saw where she was, and smiled. The crisis was over for her, and the morning that brought the thrilling news of victory obtained by the Continentals, brought such glad news to the anxious household, that no one paid much attention to the

astounding account of Washington's venture, nor cared much that there had been a thousand prisoners taken, with as many stands of arms.

Christopher, even, forgot to tell the news till the next morning after he heard it, so concerned was he about Kitty.

"What she needs now is good nursing. Unless she has a relapse she will pull through," announced the doctor. "But she must be kept carefully from excitement." And so to the sick room came none of the reports of those gallant deeds which stirred anew the hearts of a despondent people, and it was not till a letter came to Kitty, written by her father from the camp at Morristown a month later, that she heard of the victory of Trenton, and that the question of submission to the king was not so often brought up by those who, a couple of months previous, had declared nothing else was possible.

But Kitty was too weak and too content in the life of a convalescent, whose horizon ended with the walls of her room, to worry much over anything except her meals as her appetite returned. She became somewhat fretful, as was natural, when she grew strong enough to employ her hands a little.

"I am weary of forever stitching samplers," she said one day. "I would I had some other employment."

"Should you like to piece a quilt? Sister Lavinia has many rarely pretty pieces and a stock of patterns. If you like not Rising Sun or Job's Trouble, you might use Dove in the Window or Rose of Sharon."

"I wearied of quilt-piecing long ago, when my aunt so severely kept me at my task, and I was longing to run in the garden. Nay, I think I care not to begin a quilt."

"Then shall I teach you to cut a handsome watch paper?"

"For my father?"

"Yes, if you like; or for Christopher.'

"Oh, Christopher! he tries me," returned Kitty, pettishly.

"Oh, Kitty! and he is so fond of you. You do not know how good he has been, scarce budging from the house when you were so ill."

"He scarce budges now," replied Kitty. "I wish he would do so oftener."

"An ill humor is what we allow invalids," returned her mother, gayly. "Come, here is a fair bit of silver paper; what will you choose? See, here is one of two doves within this pretty wreath; should you like that? Perhaps it is too ambitious for you. You can try this sweet rose garland, or this single rose as a first attempt, and we will make it to fit exactly

your father's watchcase." So, for that day, Kitty amused herself in cutting watch papers.

Christopher, coming in, begged for one; but Kitty was contrary, and refused. Another day, however, she set to work, and cut one which she presented to the young man with a flourish, watching mischievously to see the effect of the words which surrounded the rose.

"Give me liberty, or give me death," read Christopher, and then he grew very red in the face. "Your rose carries its own thorn, Kitty," he remarked, making a movement as if he would return the watch paper.

"I never saw a rose without a thorn," was Kitty's reply.

"Sometimes they seem made on purpose to prick those to whom they are offered."

"Then 'tis one's own fault. He need not accept it, and, in sooth, I would rather you did not have it, since you can appreciate neither rose nor sentiment. Give it back to me."

"That will not I."

"'Twas made for another, I have discovered. You would not accept an unwilling gift, nor one that is intended for another destination than your pocket."

"I would have anything you give me."

"I do not give it. If you keep it, 'tis against my wish." Christopher handed back the paper and left the room, whereupon Miss Kitty sat her down to write a letter to Cicely.

The two girls had sworn eternal friendship. Not that Kitty had forgotten Elspeth, but she was entering upon a romantic period, and in those days an extreme sentimentality was encouraged. High-flown expressions, romantic epithets, abounded; therefore, Cicely and Kitty had agreed to address each other by the names of Euphemia and Leonora.

"My Beloved Euphemia:" — began Kitty's letter. "I wrote you some time since, when I was yet languishing upon a bed of sickness, but now it is my delight to tell you I am sitting up and dressed as becomes a Christian and a recovered person. I am able to receive visits, and little Mary Zane has been to see me often, also some of my mother's friends. A Miss Franks and a Miss Wister are very lively bodies, but I liked not their laughing at our troops. Little Mary, although her father is a Tory, says not unkind things, and I like much to hear her thees and thous. Of other visitors, my lord Christopher makes his bow at my door each day, with an inquiry after my health. He casts the same languishing glances as ever. I have told you how your dear

calves reminded me of him, yet methinks, I was fonder of the calves, which, alas, are no more, for you say those miscreant Hessians robbed you of every hoof. Oh, Euphemia, I must tell you that my mother and Mrs. Rush are going to a frolick to-night, and they will present a splendid appearance. My mother will wear her pink lutestring over her flowered brocade, and her hair is dressed monstrous high. My father being safe in Morristown, my mother feels that she need not give up frolicks altogether, although many a pretty rout has she missed since my illness. Oh, Euphemia! you know not what an angel of light she has been to me. I love her more than ever.

"Master Christopher came in to-day, and told me he had been riding all morning, having been in attendance at a wedding, and what with calling at the groom's house, and being on hand every evening with the bridesmaids at the tea-party, he said he felt as if he were turning into a tea-pot. Law, Euphemia, it would not be hard to imagine him such a shape; he does not grow more slender. I, myself, prefer a fairly slender youth. And that reminds me, I enclose a watch paper, which I would like you, at your first opportunity, to convey to 'Ferdinand'! Tell him not who sends it, as you love me. Ah me, Euphemia! I

would I could this moment be gazing into your true and loving orbs, and be telling you of the devotion of your convalescing

"LEONORA.

"P.S. I forgot to say that my mother is having made for me a sweet blue taffety, vastly becoming I assure you. Christopher says the bride was kissed upward of a hundred times by the masculines who called. 'Tis not a custom I should like. Perhaps I shall never be called on to endure it.

"L."

Having thus entertained herself, Kitty felt that she had done enough for one day. She was satisfied that she had written a very elegant epistle, and curled up to take her nap, conscious of having not only done her duty, but of having written so fairly as to deserve Cicely's admiration. It was a funny letter for a girl of fifteen to write, and if Cicely had been present, the conversation between the two would have been of a very different character. However, Kitty did not think of that, and went to sleep, thoroughly satisfied.

CHAPTER VIII.

BETSEY ROSS.

IT was now late in February. Since Christmas what wonders had the Continental Army wrought! Impoverished and illy-regulated, ragged and barefoot, they had marched to victory at Trenton; met the reserves of Cornwallis at Princeton and routed them; skirmished through Jersey; gained possession of Newark, Elizabethtown, and Woodbridge; and had driven the afflicting Hessians to Staten Island. Of all the brilliant records of the war nothing exceeds Washington's tactics in the Jersey campaign, when, in three weeks, he gathered up his broken army, fought two battles, and gained anew his hold of New Jersey, after taking two thousand prisoners. Beyond this, he had established himself as such a general as his enemies were learning to fear, and in whom his partisans could repose trust. And, despite the dark hours which the near future brought, the real power of the man began to show itself in the winter of '76, and grew in strength until the culminating affair of Yorktown.

"AS SHE REACHED THE DOOR SEVERAL GENTLEMEN PASSED OUT."

By the first of April Kitty was able to go out of doors, and glad enough she was to do so, even with Christopher as an escort.

"But I shall not feel quite well till I can go out alone," she persisted to her mother. "Send me an errand that I may feel I am no longer an invalid."

Mrs. De Witt laughed. "Very good. I'll send you forth at once. Do you know where Mistress Betsey Ross lives, on Arch Street?"

"Oh, yes, I do. I have been there several times with you. She is the finest sempstress in Philadelphia, I have heard it said."

"Yes, she is indeed a most accomplished needlewoman. Even your dignified General Washington must think so, since he employs her to make the embroidery of his shirt-ruffles. Go you to her, Miss Kitty, and ask if she can embroider me a kerchief such as she has done for my sister, Mrs. Rush."

Kitty made her way blithely to the little two-story house where Betsey Ross lived. As she reached the door several gentlemen passed out. One of commanding presence, and with penetrating blue eyes, looked keenly at the little maid who stood hesitatingly before the door. Kitty's heart beat as she saw they were American officers. She thought the tall man in buff and blue might even be General Washington. All her

dormant patriotism, which had remained in abeyance during her illness, seemed to rise to new life. She stood still with clasped hands, watching the men out of sight, before she entered Betsey Ross's little shop.

She found the Quakeress in more of a flutter than was usually displayed by the serene Friend, and as Kitty gave her message she shook her head. "Tell thy mother to undertake the kerchief that I cannot do, for I am over busied at present. Thou art pale, Katherine De Witt. Thy mother, I remember, told me of thy illness. Art thou quite well again?"

"Yes, ma'am, but I need the fresh air to give me back my Dutch cheeks, as my father calls them. But will you tell me, — those gentlemen — those officers, — was any one of them General Washington?"

"Thou hast guessed rightly. The dignified one with the prominent nose was he. He is one of my best customers, and has given me a fair commission."

Kitty thought of the embroidered shirt-ruffles. She was ready to hear more, but did not like to be curious.

"But," continued Betsey Ross, "thy friends are not favorable to George Washington if thou art a niece to Lavinia Rush."

"But I am not; her sister did but marry my father, and he, my father, is a brave captain under General Washington. Oh, I would that I might touch with my

own hand the fine needlework that you are doing for General Washington. I should like to think he were wearing something that had been in my hands." She looked so eager and wistful that Mrs. Ross smiled.

"'Tis an odd conceit of thine, but perhaps I can humor it. Thou shalt see what I am making, if thou art so good a patriot. Thou knowest we Free Quakers are so too. Step into this inner room. There, look at this little pencil sketch; 'twas done by George Washington, and I am to make a flag according to his directions from this. I think there will be some slight difference from this sketch, but thou canst see what it is like, and here is a set of shirts nearly finished, which thou canst examine, and canst say that thou hast helped to make, if thou dost wish. Canst set a pretty even stitch?"

"I think so. I have been carefully taught. Do you mean I may set a stitch myself?" Her cheeks glowed with delight.

"If it please thee, and thou canst do it well. Here, along this bit of linen, — just there."

Kitty took the needle and, oh so carefully, took the most minute stitch of which she was capable.

"Thou hast done well," declared Mrs. Ross, "and now, thou canst have the pleasure of knowing that George Washington will wear this."

"And," Kitty presumed on this affability to ask further, "when the flag is finished, may I see it?"

"If it would please thee so greatly, thou shalt see it, and when thou art passing this way again, come in and see how we progress with the work."

Kitty gave fervent thanks for the invitation, and went home with such sparkling eyes that Mrs. De Witt declared that she looked as if her walk alone had, indeed, done her good.

"Your father has sent us a letter by messenger, but my sister likes not to harbor rebels under her roof, so I asked him not to stay," Mrs. De Witt told Kitty. "He will come again this evening, for he returns to-night, and we must have our own letters ready to give him. Say naught to any one of who he is, nor from whence he came. It is not best to tell all one knows."

Kitty nodded understandingly. "But I should like to see him," she said, "I should like to ask and hear about my father. Did he tell you his name?"

"'Tis John Tucker."

Kitty repeated the name wonderingly. "John Tucker! why, he is a recreant, a turncoat — or perhaps he is not the same. John Tucker is not an unusual name, is it?"

"No, a very usual one. Do you know this young man?"

"I cannot tell;" and then she gave an account of Phebe and her lover, and of his accepting the protection offered loyalists. "So it cannot be he, unless he prove a spy, and how dreadful that would be," she concluded. "But may I see him?"

"I think you may. I shall receive him in the drawing-room, for my sister has gone to visit with some of her friends. You may watch for the young man, and let me know when he comes."

And therefore Kitty, at the appointed time, took her station at one of the windows. It was not long before a young man in rough homespun came up the steps. There was something familiar about his figure, but Kitty decided it must be the messenger from her father, and went to open the door.

The young man started as he saw her.

"I am Captain De Witt's daughter; you need not fear," said the girl reassuringly. "Come in, I will acquaint my mother of your coming."

The young man seemed uneasy under Kitty's close scrutiny, for she was trying to decide if he could be Phebe's quondam lover. Presently she blurted out, "Do you know my cousins, Cicely and Phebe Gardner, in New Jersey, near Crosswicks?"

The young man was silent for a moment, then he replied in a low tone, "I did know them."

"Oh, then you are *the* John Tucker," — Kitty paused; the situation was slightly embarrassing. "But I — I thought," she went on, "oh, you are not a spy, they — I should feel so dreadfully if you were."

He smiled a little sadly. "I'm no spy, and you need have no fear."

"But I thought — we thought — Phebe said you had gone over to the enemy."

"I did not go. I intended to, that I might protect myself and my property, but — never mind why I didn't. Please do not tell them yet. I can trust you. I remember all I have heard of you — and I have seen you before."

"Me?"

"Yes; do you remember the night I brought the note?"

"Was it you? I'm so glad I know. I wish I could tell; but I won't, if you say I mustn't. We mustn't tell all we know, must we? Mother says not; but I should like to know how you managed to hide your tracks."

"I climbed the porch post to the big tree, and from that I reached the roof, and got across that to the other side. It isn't far to the ground, and I dropped — into the snow. After that I walked along by the fence till I reached the orchard. I rolled

from the house to the fence, so there were no foot-prints that side."

Kitty clapped her hands softly, "How clever!"

"But I did not think of the house being searched, as I heard it was. I would have spared you all that."

"We were very glad no one was hidden, but, oh dear! — I know you are in a hurry. I must call mother, but there are so many things I want to ask, only maybe I'd better not, for I might be too anxious to tell if I knew, so I'll ask no more questions." And she ran to summon her mother, who had a short conference with the young man, and sent him off with the letters she and Kitty had made ready.

After John had disappeared into the night, Mrs. De Witt gave a sigh, and threw her arms around Kitty. "I am a sad coward," she said. "Aren't you shamed in having such a frivolous trifler of a mamma, Kitty? Methinks were I made of sterner stuff you and I would not be sitting here; but, alack-a-day! I was never meant for a heroine, and I care more for the silk-lined life of ease than for the rough road of heroism. Yet, Kitty, I love you well. And your father, do you not think I love him?"

"Not so well as I do," returned Kitty, stoutly.

Her mother gave her a little squeeze. "Why say so?"

"Because you would stand up for his cause if you did."

"Did I not tell you I was a coward? Yet, perchance, some day I will rise to an emergency and prove my affection. This waxes into a stubborn fight, despite the gloryings of such as your Aunt Joanna. She finds it hard, by the way, to forgive you for running away from her, despite my tale of your grievous illness; yet she softened somewhat at my account of your pale cheeks. Come, what will you give in exchange for a piece of news?"

Kitty considered for a moment before she said: "A pretty story I heard this morning of a maid's bravery."

"Then tell me your story and I'll tell you my news."

"It was little Mary Zane who told me of her cousin, Elizabeth Zane, who has gone with her two brothers to Virginia. The Indians attacked the settlers, who were gathered in a fort; Fort Henry, I think, was the name of it. The garrison fought bravely, but suddenly their ammunition gave out, and it seemed that they would have to surrender unless they could get more. There was a keg of powder in a house a short distance off, and Elizabeth insisted upon being the one who should go and get it; and,

finally, the officers consented to let her make the attempt. She reached the house without arousing suspicion, but as she was coming back with the keg of powder, they fired upon her; but she reached the fort in safety, and saved it. Was not that a brave girl? Ah, how terrible it must have been to go flying along with that keg of powder, and those savages firing upon her."

Mrs. De Witt put her cheek down against Kitty's soft hair. "I know another girl who was brave when bullets were flying. Did you tell me that story because I am such a coward? But now for my news. Your Aunt Joanna is to be married shortly. Surely the widows have the better chance."

"My aunt marry; and whom?"

"Some one you will like well to call uncle, I fancy." Mrs. De Witt's light laugh rang out merrily. "A Hessian officer."

"Oh!"

"I said it would please you."

"But it does not. Yet I do not so much care, since my aunt is violently opposed to one whom she once professed to love well."

"You do not need her love. Your father and mother can give you more. The camp at Morristown will soon be broken up, I hear, and we may soon see your father."

"Ah, me, I wish we were all going back to our own dear home. The garden must soon begin to look fresh and green. How long ago it seems since I saw it and Elspeth. But tell me, mother, will my aunt live in Philadelphia?"

"No; she will live — I know not where, but eventually she will go to Germany, I suppose, unless her Dutch husband finds America so fair a place that he likes to settle here. There come Lavinia and Christopher. They will wonder why we sit here without candles." And she gave a little impatient sigh.

Her sister was now entering the room, and was evidently not in a good humor. "Such doings!" she exclaimed. "Here is a stupid law requiring an oath of allegiance, or all sorts of deprivations to young men; and what is Christopher to do? I've half a mind to send him abroad till this wretched war is over. What do you think, Peggy?"

Mrs. De Witt held Kitty's hand closely. "I? what do I think?" she said slowly. "I think Christopher is old enough to decide for himself. He is nineteen now, and quite as much of a man as Kitty is a woman; and she does not hesitate to make her own decisions."

Mrs. Rush sniffed. "Oh, Kitty; she is a rebel because her father is; and what a woman thinks makes but little difference, anyhow."

"And if Christopher chooses to be a Tory, any one can say it is because brother William is, if one choose. Since then he is not capable of deciding for himself, suppose you send him to brother William, and let him learn decision." Mrs. De Witt had never spoken so sharply of her young brother, and Christopher was quite crushed.

"The town is full of troops," he said. "They are pouring in from every side; I should not find it easy to get away. Your Washington will get an army after all."

"My Washington?" Mrs. De Witt raised her eyebrows.

"Oh, I mean — zounds, Peggy, one cannot tell what you are, and yet you flout at me. With a rebel husband, I believe you are half rebel yourself."

"I am a woman," replied Mrs. De Witt, "and as Lavinia has just said, 'what I choose to be cannot trouble the militia,' but what you are can make a difference."

"I am no rebel, and you know it."

"Then go where you are not afraid to say it. There will be no trouble in getting you a pass to leave the city." And Mrs. De Witt turned on her heel, leaving her brother and sister to settle the matter between themselves, the result being that Christopher did get off to join his brother, who was again in the old home in

New York. Kitty, with but one regret, saw him depart: he was going home, he would enjoy the delights of the green bowery lanes, and she must stay behind. She so far forgot her usual rather scornful manner toward him, as to ask him to write and tell her how her own home looked, and what news he could learn of the Ludlows, a request which sent Christopher off in better spirits.

Mrs. Rush was in a perturbed state of mind, for there were threatenings against those who were not openly attached to the American cause, and her husband's return from England was daily expected.

The Stars and Stripes were adopted on June 14, and Kitty had the pleasure of laying her hand on the flag which Betsey Ross had made. She also secretly imitated it in miniature, intending, when the opportunity came, to let its destination be the same as that of the watch paper.

But the great event of the summer, to Kitty, was the march of the main body of the American army through the city. Not so fine or inspiring a show was it after all, this parade of a motley array of men, shabbily clad, at the best, in hunting shirts of brown linen, but it gave heart to the patriots to see them, eleven thousand strong, marching down Front Street to the Common. And to the disaffected spectators

who looked upon the long procession, it seemed that, after all, these poorly clad men stepped like soldiers, carried themselves valiantly, and were no mean foes. Therefore, Washington's parade on August 24 served its purpose. For Kitty it was the means of bringing her father to her. He strode in one day when they least expected him. Kitty gave a little cry of joy when he sought her out in the garden. She flung herself in his arms, and could scarcely speak for happiness. Sunburnt and lean he was, but well.

"And you, my Kitty, you are still pale," he said. "Ah, daughter! we did not know what was in store for us when we flew out of King George's cornfield into the woods. Nevertheless, we will resist to the death, even if we have not a feather left." And they laughed and hugged each other, feeling it to be such happiness to be again in each other's arms.

Kitty was so small a child when her own mother died that her father and she had always been more than ordinarily dependent upon each other, and the fact that his daughter had so sweetly accepted her new mother, and had shown no jealousy, endeared her the more to her father. The happy relations, however, might not have existed had Mrs. De Witt been less loving and tactful.

"You have fought your own battles, have you not,

little daughter?" Captain De Witt said caressingly. "Such tales of heroism I hear — why, you fairly outdo your father in defying the redcoats."

She laughed, and snuggled her face against his sleeve; nothing seemed to matter while she had him so near.

Mrs. De Witt, with gentle consideration, had left them together, having been the first to greet him in the house. Kitty had a hundred things to ask. Had he seen Elspeth's father and brother? Where were they? Was there any hope of there being a return to the old home?

To the last question Captain De Witt shook his head. It was better not to be attempted at present. Henry Ludlow and Robert were with General Schuyler; the former had been slightly wounded at Ticonderoga. They were looking for news from the northern army now. Kitty pondered over these answers with her head on her father's shoulder. War all around them, battles to come, and what? She sighed, but turned from the consideration of so gloomy a subject to say: "How wise you were, father, to give me a new mother before I should lose an old aunt."

"Old aunt!" replied Captain De Witt, amused. "She is not old, unless you call thirty-five old. And

what would Major von Blum say to hear his bride so called?"

"She seems old to me, and with her high nose and her snapping black eyes, she makes a fine grenadier. I should like to see her in a tall Hessian cap. Should you not, father?"

"Fie! fie! Kitty; you must not make fun of your aunt," responded Captain De Witt, but he hid a smile, and then his wife came out and joined them.

CHAPTER IX.

A VISIT TO CAMP.

CAPTAIN DE WITT'S stay was very short, for he must join his regiment on the march toward Wilmington. Before he took his departure he advised taking Kitty out of Philadelphia to some quiet country farmhouse where purer air and purer water could win back her "Dutch cheeks."

"Moreover," he said, "if, as seems possible, the enemy should occupy Philadelphia, you will be safer out of it."

And, therefore, to a little out-of-the-way spot Kitty and her mother betook themselves, to spend the debilitating August and September days.

Meanwhile, there was consternation in Philadelphia, for was not Howe making ready to pounce down upon the capital city? Wagons loaded with furniture, conveyances bearing away frightened women, began to fill the roads leading out of town. Those remaining hid their valuables, and sat waiting in fear and trembling.

Then came the battle of Brandywine, which, al-

though claimed as a notable victory for the British, was by no means a total defeat for the Americans, since it was fought at great odds, in point of numbers and equipment. For two weeks after, Washington, by skirmishes and manœuvres, deterred the enemy from entering Philadelphia; but on September 26, Cornwallis entered the "rebel capital" with a great blare of trumpets, and much ostentation, while Howe established himself at Germantown.

One morning in October, when the sun hid itself behind thick clouds, and a heavy fog rolled over the valleys, was fought the battle of Germantown, and that which had been so dreaded by Kitty and her mother at last befell them. "Paul De Witt, taken prisoner," was the word which came to them in their quiet retreat.

And now was Mrs. De Witt fairly roused; all the gentle indifference, the laughing protestations of cowardice disappeared, and instead of the gay society dame appeared a stern woman, whose set countenance betrayed the grief which had touched her so deeply.

Dreadful talks of the suffering prisoners reached both the wife and daughter. Kitty seemed dazed by this trouble. "It had never seemed possible that such would be the reward of my patriotism," she said pitifully. "Oh, for a means to rescue him," she cried. But no plan offered itself, and at last she decided to

appeal to her Aunt Joanna, and implore her good offices in rescuing her brother from his plight. "I can but fail," she told herself, "but I shall not tell my mother lest she build too great hopes."

She made all preparations carefully, and one morning early she slipped out into the gray dawn, leaving a little note behind her, which should do away with any alarm at her absence. She determined, somehow, to make her way to camp where she would find Major von Blum, and first enlisting his sympathies, would then seek out her aunt. To be sure, Mrs. De Witt had used every means within her power to obtain her husband's release, but beyond fair promises, had gained nothing from her Tory friends, and Aunt Joanna had actually refused to see her, and so she had returned from her visit to Philadelphia with so despairing a heart, and so exhausted a frame, that Kitty could only weep over her, and try to cheer her by such words of comfort as she could summon.

"I *will* see Aunt Joanna," she said to herself; "they will let a little girl go where they will refuse an older person. She shall listen to me; she cannot know, she cannot, that her own brother lies in a foul prison."

The morning was crisp and bright, a light hoar-frost lay on the embrowned weeds and the fallen red leaves. The fences, with their delicate layer of frosty white,

sparkled in the rising sun. How could the world be so beautiful, and one be so heavy-hearted, thought the girl as she trudged along. How she was to get through the lines she did not know. She knew the Hessians were encamped on the north side of the city, but beyond this she had not a very clear idea of the situation, yet she could use her wits and travel the beaten road which would take her somewhere. There were reports that food was becoming scarce, that firewood was hard to obtain, and she was glad that in the quiet little farmhouse where she was staying there was a more plentiful supply. It occurred to her, as she walked briskly along, that she might meet soldiers on the road, and that she would not know just what to do; but she determined to proclaim herself as the niece of Mrs. von Blum, and to ask for safe conduct to the presence of this new uncle, from whom she would obtain a pass to the city that she might visit her aunt.

"She will not let her brother suffer. She will not," repeated the girl, clasping her hands nervously. "For all her high temper she loved him, and she cannot be so hardened against us as to refuse to see that he is supplied with good food. Even if she cannot work his release, she may be able to have him kept a prisoner at her house till he can be exchanged. My father! my father!" But there is always hope with youth,

and the thought that he was still alive, and that while he lived anything was possible, gave her new courage, and she pressed on over what became a weary road. But at last she came to the outposts of the camp.

She was now stopped by an advance picket, and, having neither countersign nor written pass, was allowed to go no further till her repeated demand for Major von Blum finally moved the wits of the dull German, who sent her into camp with a guard, and the little girl's heart beat high as she passed along and saw only rude soldiers moving about, variously occupied, their bearded faces looking strangely to her who was used to seeing only smoothly shaven men.

"Major von Blum? No, he has just gone to the city with his wife," was the information given her by the officer to whom she was taken. "Or stay, Leidernitz, see if you can overtake them: they have but just gone, and may not be beyond recall. It will be best to see if this is all right." And Kitty waited to presently see her aunt ride up with a burly German.

For a moment Kitty whimsically thought of the laugh she had had with her father over her grenadier aunt, and then Mrs. von Blum lifted her mask and leaned down from the horse to look at the little girl who demanded to see her husband.

"Kitty! Katherine De Witt!" she exclaimed.

"How came you here? Is your mother with you?"

"No, ma'am."

"You came to camp alone? Is that how Margaret De Witt looks after you?"

"Oh, Aunt Joanna! Aunt Joanna!" cried Kitty. "'Tis for my father. He is a prisoner. Will you — can you not try to set him free? Oh, Aunt Joanna!"

Mrs. von Blum gave a start, and made a little exclamation. Then she looked at her husband, and a hard look settled around her mouth. "Set him free? I cannot. 'Tis the reward of his obstinacy has brought him to this pass."

"But he may die. You know not how dreadfully they treat prisoners in that vile jail."

"I will do what I can, but I am not empowered to loose prisoners at will. Perhaps I can make him more comfortable, and maybe in time he may be set free on parole, or perhaps exchanged. But, Kitty, neither of you has any right to expect favors at my hands. Remember, you all set me aside; you ran off and left me, and Paul scorned my counsels. You must expect to suffer for it, at least till you are ready to acknowledge error." Aunt Joanna had not changed. She was the same unyielding, opinionated person. "Think as I command you, or no forgiveness," had

been always her thought in dealing with Kitty. She could forgive greater faults, but she could not overlook anything which showed defiance of her opinions.

"This is my niece, Herman," said Aunt Joanna, addressing the big red-faced man by her side. He smiled down on the anxious little maid, who thought he seemed good-natured, but when Aunt Joanna explained Kitty's errand, he looked sober.

"Thou shalt have thy way, Yohanna," he said, in German; "but can we not take our Katrina to Philadelphia with us?"

Aunt Joanna shook her head. "Not now. Perhaps later she may come. I am not pleased that she came to camp alone. She could have sent me written word as well. The roads are full of soldiers, and it was a most indiscreet performance of hers. She must have escort back."

"Oh, I met no one, no one at all," said Kitty. "Please, Aunt Joanna, I'd rather go back alone." The idea of a walk with one of those ferocious-looking Hessians was terrifying. "It is not such a very long walk, and once beyond camp I am safe."

"Then see her beyond camp, Herman, and I will wait here," said Aunt Joanna, who did not like her day's plans interfered with. "Good-by, Kitty." She settled herself stolidly on her horse. "You'd

better be a good girl, and ask my pardon for your past behavior. You could have a merry time if you would but consent to visit me as a loyal little maid."

"A merry time in the city where my father lies a prisoner!" replied Kitty, spiritedly. "Thank you, Aunt Joanna, I'd rather feed chickens and milk cows all my days than do it."

"Then ask me no more favors," returned Aunt Joanna, her anger rising. "And come no more to camp. I'll not be disgraced by such recklessness. Tell Peggy De Witt I'm ashamed of her."

"She does not know of it," answered Kitty; "I came of my own accord."

"Then return at once. No, not another word. I've said what I would do," and Aunt Joanna wheeled her horse around, and Kitty, accompanied by the burly major, was safely escorted beyond the lines.

She was rather despondent and miserable over her failure to arouse greater sympathy. Yet she felt that something had been accomplished, and that her father might not, perhaps, be allowed to suffer long. "But I do not want him to suffer a day; how can I be happy when I think of it? I want to free him. I do. I do," said she, as she pursued her way. "I wish I had as fertile a brain as Elspeth. I might

devise some means of escape." Just at this moment a horseman appeared over the brow of a hill a little beyond. He had saddle-bags on each side and Kitty saw that he was dressed in the homely garb of a Quaker farmer. She breathed freely; she did not need to fear an honest Quaker, and she stepped aside to allow him to pass. The man approached slowly. He seemed a tall, broad-shouldered fellow, who sat his horse well. Kitty did not look up as he passed or she would have seen a very un-Quakerlike movement toward the broad-brimmed hat, and have seen the amused smile which followed. The man had hardly gone a rod, however, when Kitty heard his horse trotting up briskly behind her, and leaning from his saddle the young man looked earnestly into her face.

"I was not mistaken," he exclaimed joyously. "You are Miss Katherine De Witt, and right glad am I to see you. Have you forgotten me?"

Kitty raised her eyes to encounter the pleasant face of Lloyd Holliday, and her first feeling was one of great pleasure, but almost at once she drew back and said coldly: "So you have changed your colors, Mr. Holliday. When I last saw you, 'twas not in Quaker drab."

"I'll have to explain," he replied, jumping down

from his horse. "I know I can trust you and I cannot have you think me indifferent to my country. This is but a disguise. I am trying to get to the city, and I can do so in this dress more readily than in any other, especially when I take such provision along with me," and he nodded toward the saddle-bags which were bursting with various kinds of produce. "You see," he said, "I bought this stuff from the farmers back in the country, and am taking it to town, hoping by such means to effect an entrance. Do not think hardly of me, Miss Kitty, when I wear this." And he drew a case from his bosom, and showed her the little watch-paper bearing the words; "Give me Liberty or give me death."

"Oh, but," cried Kitty, in alarm, "you must not wear that; it might betray you."

"But 'twas you who sent it?"

"Did I?"

"Did you?"

"Well, yes, I did," she blushed a little, but laughed afterward. "I thought you deserved something of the kind more than did Master Van Ness who begged for one. 'Twas for him I made this, but he would none of it, or, at least, he took it with so poor a grace that I sent it to a more patriotic gentleman, as I hoped. But give it back to me, lest it cause you trouble."

The young man hesitated, and stood looking at the bit of paper thoughtfully, before he said: "Tell me, Mistress Kitty, whither you are bound, and how I came to find you on the road alone to-day. I left you in New Jersey, you remember?" And Kitty, remembering her troubles, poured them forth to the sympathetic, courteous young fellow, who listened intently.

At the close of her narration he handed her the watch-paper. "Keep it for me," he said, "and when I come for it, you will give it back, will you not?"

"Yes, if you wish."

"And if I come not you will know I tried to be an honorable gentleman enough to have no debts unpaid. I do not forget that you saved my life."

"Pray remind me not of that, but tell me rather, how you happen to be on this road. I thought you were encamped near White Marsh."

"And so we are, but I was sent to General Washington with despatches. And since I have permission to make some discoveries if I can, I am on my way back to my regiment, by way of Philadelphia."

"A spy!"

"Something very like it."

"And if you are discovered you will be hung." Kitty paled at the thought.

"Yes, I confess I'd rather be shot, but I intend to be neither hung nor shot, if I can help it. A little hazard hurts no one, and gives spice to a soldier's life. So, Miss Kitty, dear to me as is your solicitude, have no fears; I shall get through; I have good friends in the city with whom I can rest safely." He was walking along by her side, his horse following and cropping at the bits of grass peeping up between the dead weeds and fallen leaves by the way.

"Give me the exact location of your stopping-place," said Lloyd, "and if Providence permit, you shall see me there some day."

"'Tis off the road to Bethlehem, just beyond Chestnut Hill. A low, gray farmhouse, about a mile this side Paul's Mill. Conrad Shafer is our host."

"Ah! then you were on the battle-ground, or nearly so."

"Yes, we were all too near for comfort, we were made very sad at the loss on our side."

"We will recover our losses yet, never fear. I, for one, do not believe in croaking, and with such a general as Washington we shall win; we cannot help it. And you will have your father again, Miss Kitty; but guard him safely, and let him do nothing rash."

Kitty smiled. "Now you are quite like a grand-

mother with your advice. 'Twas as a grandmother you appeared when first we met, you remember."

"Do I not remember? I shall never forget how you and Cicely burst in upon me. You hear from Cicely?"

"Not very often, since all this coming and going of the armies I have not heard at all."

"Here must I bid you farewell. I do not care to be seen by wayfarers, for it might interfere with my plans. This meeting has given me new courage. Forget me not, Kitty." And, flinging himself into his saddle, he trotted off, while Kitty proceeded on her way.

CHAPTER X.

A RESCUE.

KITTY found her mother sitting by an open fire, scraping lint for the wounded soldiers who still lay in the hamlets in the neighborhood, and to whom both she and Kitty had ministered so far as they could. Mrs. De Witt's pretty, fair face looked pale and worn, and her mouth drooped sorrowfully. The unwonted scenes of distress and suffering which she had beheld, together with her own personal grief over her husband, had told on her. But she jumped up and ran to meet Kitty when she came in the door of the long, low kitchen.

"Where have you been, you runaway?" she said. "High time, indeed, that you were home. Have you been comforting those poor wounded men at the church? Heaven knows they need nursing! Why did you not waken me that I might have sent some fresh linen to them? You look weary, my love."

"I am very tired and very hungry," replied Kitty, sinking down on the settle. "I have walked a long

way this day. You would not believe how far. I fear my journey has been to little purpose, after all." And she told her tale while her mother listened eagerly.

"Oh! the brave daughter of as brave a father," she said softly. "And I sit here. Nevertheless, Kitty, I tried, I did try."

"So you did, and I think father will be the better off for our efforts, even though he is still a prisoner. Aunt Joanna surely cannot see him suffer."

Mrs. De Witt sighed, and her soft hands resumed their work. "I have torn up all the linen I could spare for bandages," she remarked, "and our boxes are that much lighter; but we can manage with a change apiece, I am sure. Ah, Kitty, I would you could have gone with your aunt to see your father; it would have cheered him, and we could have assurance that Joanna really would carry out her promise. Lavinia has a houseful of soldiers quartered upon her, and a sad time she is having of it, for it is hard to find food save at a great price, and for all her Tory principles she is not free from plundering of her chests and stores. She tried with right sisterly feeling to use her good offices for your father, but it availed nothing except promises for the future. So we fain must wait the good pleasure of some of our friends to set Paul at liberty."

"And in the meantime he must suffer and perhaps die," returned Kitty.

"No! no!" Mrs. De Witt spoke up, sharply. "Do not think it. Do not say it: not that. We must keep up hope, we must. Let us speak no more of this. 'Tis useless, and but racks us with anxious fears. Tell me of Major von Blum."

"He is a heavy-whiskered, big German, but not unkind. I wonder does he spread butter on his bread with his thumb, as they say General Knyphausen does."

A little smile flickered across Mrs. De Witt's lips. "Fie, Kitty," she said. "But I have forgotten, you are faint and weary. I must get you some food. Our good Schafer and his wife have gone to sell supplies at camp. So we are left alone till they return."

A good bowl of bread and milk appeased Kitty's hunger. She had eaten nothing since morning but a couple of slices of bread, which she had taken with her, and she was half starved. She ate hungrily, talking between spoonfuls.

"And there is left an exchange," she must recur to the subject of her father; "we can try for that, can't we, mother?"

"We can and will. I have not been idle in that direction. I have sent many letters, and if these fail I shall go in person and force my way to the hearing

of those in power, if nothing else will do. I am more cheered than I was, Kitty. After the first shock I came to my courage. We will work as women can work who have the will to do it. Ah, if Joanna but had the will too."

"She has will enough," replied Kitty, "but she uses it for her own designs."

"So wise grows my Kitty, I forget she is not a woman. All these sad experiences have added years to us both. But there, I hear the voices of our Schafers. You are tired out, let us go to our room."

It was two or three days later that the old German and his wife made another trip to camp with supplies. It was a harvest time for these thrifty people, who could obtain big prices for whatever they chose to sell, and who were not particular whether Americans or British were their customers.

"Dey'll dake vat we got anyhow," said the old man. "Zo we petter pe sellin' dan pe stealed py already." And so all possible provision was turned into cash.

The Americans, it is true, tried to prevent this carrying of supplies into town, and were watchful, providing close picketing; but the farmers would not be prevented, and those living on neutral ground managed to outwit the guards.

Nothing further had been done in Captain De Witt's direction, since Kitty's trudge to camp. Her mother looked anxiously for answers to her letters, and Kitty fretted over a delay which seemed to her endless.

"The next time produce is taken from here I'll beg to go in Mrs. Schafer's stead," she declared, "and I'll find out about my father willy-nilly."

Mrs. De Witt looked at her admiringly. "You have such persistence, Kitty," she said. "I wonder why I shrink from doing the things you do. I'll write letters by the dozen; I'll see my friends, but to undertake adventures I cannot."

They were sitting in the kitchen, which was the living room of the little farmhouse, and the only one in which there was a fire. The early twilight was gathering, and the one tallow candle which Mrs. De Witt lighted cast a feeble gleam over the homely interior, disclosing the wide fireplace, the sanded floor, the pewter or earthen dishes ranged along the shelves, the plain pine table, and the settle by the fire.

It grew darker, but still Conrad Schafer and his wife did not return, but about eight o'clock was heard the beat, beat, of a horse's hoofs along the lane. Then the sound stopped; there was a glimpse

of a face at the window, then a tap at the door, which was almost immediately thrown open, and the drab garb of a Quaker appeared.

At first Kitty thought the figure was that of Lloyd Holliday, but a cry of glad surprise from her mother declared to her that it was her father who stood before her.

"Are you alone?" he asked softly.

"Yes, yes, we are."

"Then I am safe," and he closed the door behind him. "I can take no risks, for I fear your farmer might betray me."

"He might for a reward. He is keen to drive a bargain, is Conrad Schafer," returned Mrs. De Witt. "But oh, Paul, Paul! how did you escape? I can scarce believe I see you here."

Kitty was clinging to him and repeating, "Father! father! dearest father!"

They set him down before the blazing fire, but he remembered his horse and went out to hide him in some safe spot, while Kitty kept guard. "You are safe? you are not pursued?" she asked anxiously, as he appeared.

"No. I am safe enough unless your man has a chance to betray me."

"Are you hungry?"

"No, no, I have been well looked after this past twenty-four hours."

"Then come in and tell us your tale. Father! father! This is too good to be true. We have been in a pitiful fear for you."

"And might have been, if my fate had been that of some." He sat down on the settle, his wife on one side, his daughter on the other. Kitty's ears were strained for the slightest noise from outside, as she listened to his story.

"It was yesterday that I made my escape," he began. "I had been huddled with a number of others in one room, when an order came to transfer half a dozen of us to other quarters. I was glad enough to hear it, for even the few days I had spent in a foul-smelling room with wounded, groaning, dying men about me showed me how unendurable it would become if my time there were prolonged. I know not at whose instance it was done, but the order came, and about dusk we men were marched out and hustled into a wagon with a body of horse to guard us. We jolted along quietly enough, congratulating ourselves that we had a breath of fresh air, when we turned into a quiet street, upon which there seemed likely to be but little traffic, but where a big Conestoga wain was advancing from the opposite

direction. It would seem that the horses became suddenly fractious, for the driver lost management of them, and they came tearing down the street, crashing into us, and the wheels of the big wagon locked in ours. Then such a roaring and shouting as filled our ears. The two sober-looking farmers driving the Conestoga tried to smooth matters by explaining and expostulating in their mildest tones, 'Friend, thee does wrong to use such language,' and 'Friend, we are not to blame. See, we will help thee to extricate thyself.' And the two got out of their wagon, which contained, we could tell by the baa-ing and bleating, several calves and sheep.

"'Stupid dolts!' cried our drivers. 'Country blockheads! Couldn't you see where you were going?' And the guards rode around blustering and ordering, while we sat still, having no part in the matter.

"Suddenly, thump! went a wheel on one side of our wagon, and we found ourselves sliding down toward the end; while, almost at the same moment, there was a pretty fuss, for, by some means, an old ram got loose and went tearing around, butting into this and that one, scaring the horses and scattering them in all directions. Our driver, who was examining the wheels, was butted full in the stomach, and tumbled over doubled up. In all this confusion, I

felt myself dragged from my place, a cloak thrown over me, a broad-brimmed hat clapped on my head, and a lantern thrust into my hand. A crowd was gathering, and I had sense enough to crawl under the wagon on one side and crawl out on the other. As I raised myself, I heard some one whisper, 'Escape quickly!' and a bit of paper was tucked into my fingers.

"I got on my feet and looked after the ram, which at that moment gave his last fling, for a bullet ended him, and I saw I had no time to lose. I realized that the whole thing was a clever plot; and I mingled quickly with the crowd, and with my lantern pursued my way up the street, turning at the first corner, and, quickening my pace, turned into this alley and that one. I heard a hue and cry behind me, but my lantern — without which no one dares to be abroad after dark — and my broad-brim saved me. I dared not run; but by hurrying here and doubling there, I finally came to a garden, the wall of which I climbed, and crouched down in a sheltered spot till all should be quiet, and then I took up my way again.

"I remembered to look at the bit of paper, which told me to go to a certain house where I was expected and where I would be safe. So I found the place without difficulty, and walked up boldly, knock-

ing at the door, which was instantly opened by a Quaker dame, who said at once, 'Thou art welcome, Paul De Witt,' and inside I went to be fed and warmed most hospitably.

"A little later came striding in two sturdy fellows, one without hat or cloak, but in Quaker gray. Both laughed when they caught sight of me, and the elder clapped me on the shoulder. 'So thou didst make it,' he cried. 'It was a pretty plot, and I was for a moment near to betraying myself by laughter at the expression of this innocent,' nodding toward the younger man. 'Ho, ho, wife, but thou shouldst have seen him standing so mildly and with so bewildered a look on his face, saying: "Some one has stolen my hat and cloak, which I laid by to pursue the ram. Hast seen them, Cyrus?" And there he stood and pothered about his hat and cloak, and persisting to these Britishers that they were accountable for them, and that he should bring in a bill for them, and such stuff; when all the while our friend here was wearing them, according to Lloyd's own plan.'"

"Lloyd!" exclaimed Kitty.

"Yes, Lloyd Holliday and no other. To him I owe this escape. He took the bull by the horns, and went to see Mrs. Rush, who told him she had been promised that I should at least have a speedy re-

moval to more comfortable quarters, and an exchange as soon as possible; that the order for my transfer to other quarters would be acted on at once. And he made his plans accordingly."

"Then it wasn't Aunt Joanna after all," said Kitty.

"Dear Lavinia! I knew she would do all she could," said Mrs. De Witt; "but go on, Paul."

"Yes, Lloyd planned it all. He hired the wagon, bought the sheep and calves, and with his accomplice, a good, fighting Quaker, got into town easily, although how he got out in the first place, I cannot say. He dares more than most, and wins. He it was who drew out the linch-pin, which let down the wheel, and further complicated matters. He it was who furnished me with cloak, hat, and lantern, while his companion, that brave Cyrus Wright, let loose the ram, and kept the guard busy. 'Twas a fine plot, and well executed."

Kitty clapped her hands. "Was it not? Is not Lloyd clever!"

"I never saw one more so, nor more fearless and cool-headed. That's the stuff we need to win our battles. But hark! do I hear wheels?"

Kitty went to the door and listened. 'Twas nothing but the wind," she reported. "Go on, father, tell us the rest. How did you get out of town?"

"I slept peacefully with those good people, the Wrights, who gave me shelter, and kept in hiding the next day, and then leaving Cyrus behind, Lloyd and I drove out safely in the big Conestoga wain, the sentry supposing us to be the same two Quakers, who came into town with our veal and mutton the day before, and who were given an order to return. 'Twas a clever dodge."

"And Lloyd?"

"Has gone to return the team he hired, and purposes then to rejoin his company. I shall not forget that boy, who, by the way, bade me tell my daughter that he hoped she would believe he tried to pay his debts; and when I would thank him he reminded me that but for my Kitty he might now be pining in a stinking jail, or be under the sod. Ah, he has great daring for one so young."

"'Tis the age when adventures come easiest," remarked Mrs. De Witt. "Our own La Fayette is scarce older. I, too, shall remember this brave fellow. But hark! I hear wheels surely. See, Kitty, if they come."

Kitty peered into the darkness. "They do, they do. Hasten, father."

"Then adieu, my dear ones, my dear ones. God bless you and keep you." And after a hurried em-

brace Captain De Witt rushed out into the night, and his horse was heard galloping down the road at the same time that old Conrad Schafer and his wife drew up before the barn.

It was that same night, after Kitty and her mother had gone to their room with happy hearts, in their ears sounding that "God bless you," that they saw several columns of smoke rising skyward, and watched them from their little window. Then followed the illuminating glow of flames which told that the British had set fire to more than one fine old homestead.

"'The terror that walketh by night,' doesn't it remind you of that?" said Kitty, solemnly.

"It reminds me of how terrible war is," replied Mrs. De Witt, leaning her head against Kitty's fair hair.

"Oh, mother, mother, it is terrible. How long ago, how long ago it seems since we sat in our own home, and watched the swallows flying to the chimney."

"Long ago it seems, but I am thinking only of your father's safety this night. I have no room for any feeling but thankfulness."

CHAPTER XI.

VALLEY FORGE.

EARLY in December, 1778, General Howe retired to winter quarters at Philadelphia. Congress had adjourned to Lancaster and then to York, where they continued to hold sessions. By the latter part of November Forts Mifflin and Mercer were in the hands of the British, who now found the Delaware open to them.

After the battle of Germantown came the news of Burgoyne's surrender, which spurred Howe on to an abortive attempt at battle; but beyond a little skirmishing there was no action, and the British returned to Philadelphia leaving in their line of march a devastated and plundered district, for the soldiers did not hesitate to burn and pillage wherever they could.

The effect of this destruction of property was felt in the neighborhood where Kitty and her mother still remained, and, although they escaped the worst depredations, being in an isolated spot, the news of all this robbing and terrorizing reached them. "His

Excellency, General Washington, leaves White Marsh for Valley Forge, I am told," Mrs. De Witt said to Kitty,

"Yes, and in such plight are our poor soldiers that they have left their track in blood on the snow. So said Thomas Bent, who came this way with produce for the city."

Mrs. De Witt was very thoughtful. "Katherine, my dear child," she said presently, "I think we must return to the city." She leaned over and took the girl's hands within her own. "Whatever happens, Kitty, trust me. I may seem a very renegade, a frivolous butterfly; but censure me not, till you see what comes out of it all. Sitting here in this quiet farmhouse I have thought out many things, and I am determined upon my course of action. And, Kitty, love, if I sometimes ask you to do things which seem exactly contrary to my professions make no comment before persons, but understand that I am playing a part. Can you be as wise as a serpent, my innocent little dove? Surely we love each other well, do we not? Have I disappointed my daughter, or does she believe in her mother?"

She looked so fair and lovable leaning forward in her high-backed chair, the sunlight, from the little window in the slanting roof, streaming over her

brown hair and gliding down to her simple dress, which she now invariably wore, that Kitty, whose early adoration had, through familiarity, changed to a quiet affection, felt the old-time delight in her returning, and she knelt before her, kissing her white wrists and saying: "Dear, sweet mother, I love you dearly, dearly. After my season of Aunt Joanna's harsh government think you that I am likely to be forgetful of how gently you have dealt with me? Trust me, my mother, and don't keep anything from me."

"Some things I must, but when you see me decked in gay apparel while the poor soldiers go barefoot and hungry, you must not think me hard-hearted." She laid her cheek against Kitty's sunny hair for a moment. "You are getting a big girl, Kitty: almost as old as I was when I first married, and what you say and do may be considered of more magnitude than it would have been a year ago, so be cautious when we go back to Sister Lavinia's, and keep a discreet silence where you do not approve. 'Twill serve our ends better, and do you no harm in controlling that little honest tongue of yours."

"So I shall learn to be as diplomatic as Mr. Benjamin Franklin," said Kitty, laughing. "But is it honest not to speak?"

"It is politic sometimes, and all is fair in love and

war. Be like the Quakers and don't stir up strife, yet be truthful too. And now we must get ready to depart."

"Mother, why do we not go back to our own home? Surely we could be quiet and happy there."

"We can be of more service here, and you know your father has given everything to the cause, save the homestead. His lands, his horses, — all his other property has gone to swell the fund for carrying on the war."

"Ah, I did not know that. How brave and true he is."

A soft light came into Mrs. De Witt's lovely eyes. "How brave and true he is," she repeated. "We must be brave and true, must we not, to be worthy of him? So come now, let us prepare for what is before us."

The next day found them before Mrs. Rush's house. A guard was at the door and a group of redcoats stood just inside.

Mrs. Rush bustled out to meet them. "Welcome back, sister," she said; "you and Kitty will have to store yourselves away in a back room for a day or two, for I am overpowered by this troop of soldiery, and although the gallant colonel who came with his train has promised to seek other quarters to-morrow,

I am quite put to it to-night. Yet you are heartily welcome. I thought it was time you were wearying of that country retreat, and was glad to send you the pass to bring you through the lines."

And then Kitty realized that her mother had parted amicably from her sister, giving Kitty's health an excuse rather than a difference of opinion on political subjects.

"Come now, Miss Kitty, furbish yourself up to look your prettiest," Mrs. Rush went on. "These gay young sparks will be fine gallants for our little maid, will they not, Peggy? And 'tis a pity you are not still a widow, for there are beaux enough for the widows too, who, indeed, I sometimes think, stand a better chance than the innocent little damsels. But there, I am too free to express myself. I shall take pains to let my guests know that, even if you have a husband and I a brother-in-law in the rebel camp, we are all good Tories at heart. We have plenty to eat, now that the blockade is raised. So hasten and dress for dinner; it will soon be served." And the brisk dame hurried below to look after her domestics.

Kitty could see that she was not averse to entertaining the English officers, and wondered that her mother should voluntarily place herself where she

would come in daily contact with her husband's enemies, the more especially as so many ladies had left the city on the approach of the British, not caring to dwell in a garrison town.

But she soon perceived the wisdom of this course of her mother's, for Mrs. De Witt's affairs being in the hands of her elder brother, she did not want for means, and managed indirectly to send help to the patriots, when it was not suspected.

It was a bitter winter, and one that Kitty never forgot. Many a night she cried herself to sleep, after listening to the mocking words of Mrs. Rush's guests, who laughed at the idea of the starving, freezing men at Valley Forge calling themselves an army; and who, fat and comfortable, poured out threats and abuse for the rebels who dared defy his majesty.

Often Kitty would see her mother flush and pale as some more than usually strong expression of contempt and malice would be heard. And Kitty herself would bite her lips to keep from crying aloud with indignation. And would beg her mother, when they were alone, to allow her to stand up for her friends.

"My child, 'twould do no good," Mrs. De Witt would say, "and 'twould but bring suspicion upon

us. You must remember these gentlemen speak as before friends. They are too courteous to offend us if they knew they were doing so. And do you not see that we can make use of them? Be wisely silent, my little girl."

It was when matters were at their worst that she discovered her mother's real purpose. "Kitty, my love," she whispered one day, "are you willing to undertake a difficult errand for me?"

Kitty nodded assenting.

"First, then, put on your market cloak and go to the market house. On the left side, about halfway down, you will come to a stall where you must stand and wait till a country lad comes by. You must tie a bit of red ribbon on your basket, and hold it where he can see it. He will ask you if you want any fresh eggs, and you must say, 'For Mrs. De Witt?' and he will say, 'For Mrs. De Witt.' He will give you half a dozen eggs. Bring them carefully to me. Let no one see them or take them from you, for eggs are very precious." She smiled as she said this, and Kitty wondered why.

She put on her market cloak, under which she hid her little basket, and sallied forth. The streets were full of red-coated soldiers; the taverns rang with songs; the clank of swords could be heard, with

the occasional sound of a band. General Howe, in the coach he had filched from Mrs. Pemberton, went riding by; ladies were chatting with officers in the doorways; fur-capped Hessians, looking fierce and grim, lounged in knots here and there.

The market showed a busy scene, although the American forces outside the city still tried to prevent the country people from coming in. Provisions were scarce and high; butter a dollar a pound, salt four dollars a bushel, and other things in proportion.

Kitty had no difficulty in finding her boy with the eggs, which were transferred safely to her basket. A moment later a merry, bright-eyed girl, whom Kitty had often seen, and whom she knew by sight, came dashing by, and gave the boy's sleeve a twitch. He turned quickly, and the girl began a teasing romp with him, which ended in her running off with his jacket.

"What a romp is Mary Redmond," said Kitty, in telling her mother of the affair when she had reached home.

"You silly little miss," Mrs. De Witt returned. "Don't you know that Mary is an arrant little rebel, and that her conduct served its purpose? More than one letter of your father's has been sewed up in that same boy's jacket, and Mary knows that he is

regularly employed in bringing such news to town. He must have been suspected, and it was her way of saving him trouble."

Kitty stared. "Oh!" was all that she could say.

"And the eggs; where are the eggs?"

"Here," replied Kitty, bringing out her basket.

Mrs. De Witt got up quietly and secured the door. Then she examined the eggs, one by one. The fourth one she broke open, and lo! inside was a tightly rolled paper. "See what kind of eggs the boy had to sell," said Mrs. De Witt, laughing at Kitty's astonished look. "Is not this a clever trick? The egg has been carefully cracked, and then is carefully put together again with some of its own white. 'Twas something of a risk, but worth it. The boy's instructions were that if there was danger of discovery he was to break the whole basketful as if by accident, and after grinding all with his heel there was little danger that this would be discovered."

She unrolled the letter and read, and afterward sat very still. "Your father is well, but his men are half starved, and need clothing, food, and such things. So, Kitty, you must be a messenger to carry some money and some news which will be gladly received. I do not like to expose you to danger, but I think you will be safe, for here I have a pass

which will take you beyond the picket. A little farther on you must turn off the road until you come to a farmhouse. I will give you exact directions. You will be met by a man in British uniform, who will stop you by asking, 'Have you any strawberries?' and you must answer, 'No; I have only red herrings.'"

Kitty laughed, for it suggested Mother Goose. Her mother went on: "To this man you must give the packet which I shall intrust to you. Let no one take the packet from you, for it is most precious, and 'twould be dangerous to us if it were to fall into the wrong hands. Ah, Kitty, I am running great risks, and putting you to danger, perhaps. I almost fear to send you, but it is for Paul — your father. I know you will gladly go."

"Yes, yes, I will go gladly. I am not afraid. Kiss me, mother. Am I to go at once?"

"At once. I will get the packet ready. Slip out as quietly as you can."

After making her preparations, Kitty watched her chance, and managed to escape from the house without attracting special notice, for there were now but two officers quartered at Mrs. Rush's house, and these were absent. The girl walked rapidly along till she came to Vine Street, where a sentinel stood.

"Halt!" came the order promptly, and Kitty stood still, produced her pass, and moved on, looking toward the fields further on. Fences there were none; they had served to supply camp-fires, and she struck across from the road in the direction her mother had instructed her to take, producing her pass, and being allowed to proceed whenever she encountered a picket.

The short afternoon was waning by the time she reached the spot she was seeking. She stood still and looked around, but at first saw no one; but presently from the shadow of a shed emerged a figure which proved to be the man she sought. The short conference was hardly over, and Kitty had not yet transferred her packet, when there was a sound of clattering hoofs on the hard ground, and a foraging party came in sight riding full tilt toward them. It was evident that they were perceived. The fields were bare, the woodland was cut, the country beyond lay barren of shelter. Toward the city were stockades and blockhouses to be seen; camp-fires glowing in the wintry air, and tents dotting the camp-ground.

For a moment Kitty knew not which way to turn. The approaching party of soldiers cut her off from escape to the farmhouse. Her pass was her only security, but would the man to whom she was to give her precious packet, would he escape?

The soldiers rode up, examined the pass and handed it back, then rode off. The two breathed freely, and Kitty's companion led out his horse. "The packet, quick," he said.

Kitty's trembling fingers hastened to produce it from her bosom where it was hidden. But before she had it fairly in her hand, back galloped one of the soldiers, "What's the word?" he cried, accosting the man before him.

Kitty's friend did not stop for parley. He made a sudden swoop with his arm, caught up Kitty, and swung her before him to the saddle, put his spurs to his horse, which darted off at a mad pace.

Instantly a shot was fired, another and another. With bullets whizzing around them, the two proceeded on their way, Kitty still holding fast to her packet.

Suddenly the man gave a sharp exclamation, but his horse tore on, the soldiers in hot pursuit.

"You are hit!" cried Kitty.

"Never mind," he replied, between his teeth, "it's not serious. Can you shoot? Take my pistol. If they overtake us, give it to 'em hot and heavy."

Kitty managed to dispose of her packet and grasped the pistol; the man with one arm hanging limp, urged his horse on, on toward the Delaware. But he knew his good beast; not once did the creature falter, but

rushed down the bank, and in a moment the pursuers, left on the shore, saw the brave steed struggling through the waters with its double load. For a moment not a shot was fired, but it was only a moment before the firing was again begun. And, adding to the danger, a half dozen boats pushed off to follow them. But at last they gained the Jersey shore. The horse panting, and nearly ready to drop, struggled up. The man turned in his saddle, snatched his remaining pistol from its holster, and gave one parting shot at the first boat, then they plunged into the woods, and in a few moments the noble horse stood still, and Kitty knew they were safe.

"Oh, what an escape!" she exclaimed. "The poor dear horse, he is ready to drop. Can he carry us further?"

"We will let him take his own gait, but he has served us gallantly, haven't you, my Major? It will not do for him to stand and get chilled. We will go on."

"And your arm? does it hurt you very much? Can I do anything for you?"

"It will do for the present. We must get to some safe place for the night." The voice sounded familiar. Kitty tried to remember where she had heard it before.

Suddenly the mystery cleared. "Why, John Tucker!

Mr. Tucker!" she cried. "I didn't know it was you."

"It's Johnny Tucker straight enough. I thought you knew me."

"I ought to have; but the red uniform—and you know I never saw you clearly. What is to be done? Here we are in Jersey, and my mother will be anxious for me, if I do not return."

"Can't be helped. You ought to be glad you got off with a whole skin. I tell you it was a close shave."

"So it was. I marvel that I was not touched; but 'twas you who shielded me by placing me in front of you. I do not forget that."

"'Tis much better to have a bullet through one than to be a prisoner in one of the foul jails or prison ships," returned John. "And that packet contained, I imagine, too much to make it wise for the enemy to gain possession of it. We must now get you to a place of safety, and when this little hurt is attended to, I will ride on and try to get word to your mother. I know not how to get you back to-night."

"No, I see not how it can be done, for I left my lantern behind, and none can be abroad after dark without one. My mother told me to take it, but I

should have returned by this if all had gone well. How can you return?"

"By the upper way."

"That is good. Oh, John, your sleeve is all wet!" She gave a little shudder, and was silent for some time.

Not many minutes later, John lurched suddenly forward against her, his bridle slipping from his hand.

Kitty, terror-stricken, caught it. The horse stood still, but the girl was afraid to get down lest John should fall off, and so she urged Major on, turning a little so as to keep John more securely in the saddle.

She felt the horror of the situation. Alone in a strange place with perhaps a dying man. She called "John, John," but he made no reply, and she began to sob convulsively. "Oh, Major! Major! take me somewhere, somewhere where there are people. It is so dreadful. Oh, Major! Major! try to go in the right direction." And at last when she felt that she could no longer support the weight heavily leaning against her, she saw in the distance the twinkle of a kindly light.

In a few moments she was out of the woods and into the open. Just ahead was a small log house. The horse stopped of his own accord before the door, and Kitty called. At first a dog's bark was the only

response, but finally a woman came out, followed by a big dog.

"Who are you? What do you want?" came the questions.

"I have a wounded man. I know not whether you are friends or enemies, but I must have help."

At the sound of her voice the dog whined and sprang forward. The woman caught him back and called, "Come out here, daughter," and another smaller figure appeared with a lantern.

"It matters not if you be friend or foe," said the woman, "we will help you. We have little to give, but if your man is hurt we can perhaps aid you there. Here, I will hold him up while you get down, then perhaps all three of us can lift him off. Will the horse stand?"

"I think so. He is a rare, intelligent beast." And Kitty, cramped and aching, climbed down.

The horse turned his eyes upon the group and stood perfectly still while the women gave their attention to his master. Once when one of them spoke he gave a little whinny and looked over his shoulder at her, while the dog sniffed about and seemed much excited.

"Bring the lantern, daughter," said the woman, and when the light was brought, it displayed the features of Phebe Gardner.

Kitty gave an exclamation of delight, even in the midst of her anxiety.

"Phebe! Phebe!" she cried. "Oh, how glad, how glad I am. What good Providence led me this way? Oh, don't you know? this is John — John Tucker."

Even in the glimmering light one could see how Phebe paled as she shrank back. "John," she whispered, "John dead — dead, and in such a cause."

Mrs. Gardner had, by this time, with Kitty's help, gotten the unconscious form of the man on the ground. "He is not dead," she declared. "I feel a faint fluttering of his heart. He has but fainted."

"How glad, how glad I am," Kitty kept repeating. "Poor John! Good, brave John! It would have been terrible."

"Brave, maybe, not good," said Phebe, in a strained voice. "A traitor, in that uniform?"

"Yes, but oh, Phebe, you don't know. I forgot, you don't know. He is a true, loyal man. He has never gone over to the enemy. He has braved many a danger for his country, and the uniform is but a disguise. Come, let us bear him indoors."

But Phebe, dropping her lantern, sank to the ground, and burying her face in her hands, sobbed convulsively.

CHAPTER XII.

A SKIRMISH.

THE wounded man was borne into the house and laid upon a bed. "Poor nourishment, and cold, have undermined his strength," said Mrs. Gardner, after examining the wound. "He has lost more blood than he could stand, and a surgeon's help is needed here. Come, Phebe, this is no time for tears. Go and rouse Cicely; tell her to come down and get some lint and bandages."

She had cut away the sleeve of the scarlet coat, now dyed a deeper red, and was gently bathing the wound, while Kitty tried to force a few drops of cordial between the pale lips. She had been nearly exhausted, herself, but a drink of the cordial had revived her somewhat.

After a few moments, John opened his eyes and smiled to see Kitty bending over him. Then he caught sight of Mrs. Gardner's kind, anxious face, and he whispered, "Where are we? Who is it?"

"Don't you know me, John?" asked Mrs. Gardner;

and then Phebe came into the room, followed by Cicely. The former sank on her knees by the side of her lover, and Cicely, with a cry of delight, sprang to Kitty.

"Oh, John, John, my poor, dear John," murmured Phebe.

"Kitty! Kitty! Kitty!" cried Cicely, and the two girls laughed and cried as they hugged each other, while Phebe's tears dropped on John's scarlet uniform.

"Don't cry, Phebe, don't," whispered John. "I'd gladly give one arm to my country, if I might use the other one for you. It takes blood to wipe away cowardice, sometimes," he muttered a little later.

"I'm afraid the bone is shattered," said Mrs. Gardner, in a low tone, to Kitty. "The arm ought to be amputated at once, but there is no doctor near, and we shall be obliged to wait till morning."

Phebe's quick ear heard her. "He shall not wait. He shall not!" she declared vehemently. "He must have a surgeon at once." And seizing Kitty's cloak, she darted out of the house, and before they could realize her purpose, was on her way to the village.

John was too weak to notice much, but they made him as comfortable as they could on the bed in the next room, and then Cicely and Kitty returned to the kitchen, where, by the fireside, they told each other all that had befallen them in these months past.

It was a modest apartment. A low raftered roof showed bunches of dried herbs suspended. Over the tall chimneypiece hung yellow pumpkins. The fireplace, with its crane and kettle, was wide and roomy — so wide that the two girls, sitting on the low seat inside, could look up and see the sparks flying from the blackened chimney to meet the star-beams far above. The floor was bare, but carefully sanded, and ranged around was the pewter-ware which the family used. There were also a few earthen pieces, but not many. There was only one other room in the house, beside the garret which Phebe and Cicely occupied. The garret was under so sloping a roof that one could stand upright for only a few feet from the centre, or along the line where the ridgepole ran to the deep window embrasure. The kitchen held, beside its other furnishings, an alcove bedstead, which resembled a closet, and was really the most comfortable sleeping place in the house. A "ruffled pawn" adorned the mantel-shelf; this was simply a ruffle of calico, such as we now call a valence or lambrequin. It was a very humble home, but it was exquisitely clean, and comfortable for the times.

"And how came you here?" asked Kitty. "I was never so glad and so surprised as when I found you. Was it not God's providence directed me?"

"We came because we had to leave our home. Our lands were foraged upon by first one side and then another, so that we were stripped of everything nearly. Finally our house was occupied by the British, who threatened to burn it if we did not give it up. We had sent away a few of the things we prized most to this spot, and here we came. Father owns this little place; and it is so secluded it seems safer than the other, although we cannot tell what safety is in these times When the British and Hessians so overran New Jersey, Uncle James sent for grandmother to come to him. Now we are freed from the redcoats, but the Tories are worse, and the foraging parties may yet find us out. And now for your tale, Kitty; I am longing to know about your wild ride."

Then Kitty gave an account of herself, ending with: "And yet this errand is all in vain, and the money for my father will never reach him; and he must need it, for how desperate is the condition of our men no one can tell. Ah, me! we have had sad reverses, have we not?"

"Yes; I would there could be a battle which would give us victory."

"You have not forgotten Burgoyne's defeat; was not that a fine stroke?"

"It was, and how it did hearten us. I fear, though,

that all these skirmishes do little good, and but waste ammunition. 'Tis nothing now but these small passages of arms. Oh, Kitty, how strange about John! I am so glad he did not go over to the enemy; yet what a pity if he must lose his arm."

"It could not be in a better cause," Kitty replied. "Oh, Euphemia, what of Ferdinand?" By this name the two had decided to distinguish Lloyd Holliday.

Cicely laughed and so did Kitty. Their sentimentality was all well enough on paper, but both were too natural and unaffected to keep it up when face to face.

"Ferdinand is well, or was when I saw him last," Cicely said. "He seeks us out when he can."

"You heard how he saved my father. Oh, Cicely, was he not brave to do it? I can never forget what I owe him."

"Nor he what he owes you, for he says, 'In the one instance, 'twas but a chance that I saved Captain De Witt, while in the other, capture would have meant certain death for me.'"

Kitty sat looking thoughtfully into the fire, watching the twisted shapes of smoke, and the pictures which the charring logs made. There was no other light, for candles were scarce, and Mrs. Gardner had taken hers into the next room.

"I see a lantern," said Cicely, suddenly. "Phebe must be coming back with the doctor. Oh, I do hope no harm came to her."

In another moment Phebe entered. On her dark hair lay little misty drops of rain, and the same light particles flecked her scarlet cloak. The doctor, muffled up, followed her. In Phebe's eyes was an anxious look, as she led the way to the next room.

Presently she came back, the tears rolling down her cheeks. She sank down on the floor before the fire, and rocked to and fro, and the other two girls placed themselves beside her, for was it not a terrible moment to the girl whose lover lay suffering in the room so near her? Who knew what might be the result of the operation? for John, exhausted by the bleeding, and without the help of the anæsthetics which to-day are in such general use, might succumb utterly.

There was the sound of a suppressed groan, and Phebe gave a shuddering cry as she buried her face in her sister's lap.

Mrs. Gardner came to the door, her usually rosy face quite pale. "Get me some warm water as quickly as possible, Cicely," she said. And Cicely filled a can from the kettle hanging on the crane.

They had a whispered consultation; and, after light-

ing a candle, Cicely ran upstairs, returning with an armful of linen cloths. Then she came back and took Phebe's nervous hands in hers.

"It's all over, Phebe. No, no, — I mean the amputation," as Phebe looked at her wildly. "John is doing nicely. He bore it like a hero. You can see him soon; and," she whispered, "I'll warrant his best cure will be yourself."

A little wan smile came to Phebe's white lips.

Cicely went to a shelf and took down a bottle. Pouring some liquid into a pewter cup she added spices and water, then heating the poker she thrust it into the mixture. "Drink this, Phebe," she said, "and you, too, Kitty, must have some. I should have thought of it before. 'Twill start up the blood, and you both have need of it. I must mix a potion for the surgeon. Come, help me, Phebe. He will be here presently. Heat the poker while I do the mixing."

Phebe, thus appealed to, aroused herself, and drinking down the mugful, stirred about to set out refreshment for the doctor, who had a cold ride before him. When he came from the next room, Phebe stood for a moment looking at him with anxious inquiry, but, at an assenting nod, she opened the door and went in, leaving Cicely with Kitty's help to look after the doctor.

"He'll pull through, I think," said the good man, "although he is pretty weak, and will need strengthening stuff. I'll come over again to-morrow to see how he fares. These are hard times for sick folks, and for well ones not much less so." He sighed as he rose to put on his greatcoat, then pulling down his coonskin cap over his ears, he bade them good night. At the door he paused, "Your man will need watching," he said.

But Kitty was not allowed to share that night's vigils, and, indeed, she was not equal to it. She felt very tired and sore. It had been a hard strain on her. So when Mrs. Gardner declared that she and Phebe would watch over the patient, Kitty was glad to cuddle into bed with Cicely. It was cold up in the little garret, with no fire, but once down in the depths of the feather bed the girls thought nothing more cosey, and Kitty was too fatigued to stay awake very long.

She was awakened before daylight by a rapping on the door below, and a voice cried, "Bring along your rebel soldier! We know he's in there."

A smothered cry from Phebe smote the ears of her sister, who, at the rapping, sat erect in the nest of feathers. Kitty, too, raised her head. Cicely sprang from the bed and ran downstairs, and Kitty made

haste to peep out of one of the little windows through which the first dawning light was stealing. Below was a figure on horseback, his cloak closely wrapped about him. Kitty flew to the window at the opposite end. A like figure was below. The house was surrounded. In some way John had been betrayed. A troop of Tory foragers were ready to seize him.

Kitty threw on her clothes and ran downstairs. "We won't give him up: we won't," she whispered as she ran.

Don, who had been sleeping on the hearth by the smouldering fire, had sprung up and was barking furiously. Before the barred door stood Phebe, with a set face. She held a pistol aimed at the door. Cicely was dragging John's long sabre along. Kitty could see no other weapon than a kettle of soft soap, which stood in the corner. She seized it and made off upstairs.

The battering and banging continued. "Give up the ragamuffin rebel, or we'll make it hot for you!" came the threat.

Kitty opened the little window above and peeped out. Directly below her stood the man from whom the loudest threats came. The girl lifted the kettle, — a heavy weight for her slender arms, — poised it on the sill, and then let the contents go splashing down on the man below.

There was a spluttering, and a sudden exclamation of disgust, but the banging on the door ceased. In its stead was heard the sharp report of a pistol. Kitty ran downstairs again. Some one was at the window, through which the shot had just entered striking the mantelpiece.

The figure at the window was forcing an entrance when Don sprang forward, and with a growl, gripped the man's leg; but a single shot, then a blow, laid the faithful creature low, and, with one plaintive whine, he dropped to the floor, turning his soft eyes on those he had striven to defend, and then lying limp and lifeless.

At this moment there was a noise of more tumult outside. "Crack! Crack!" went the pistols from every quarter. The man at the window suddenly fell over the sill, and was dragged outside. There was the sound of departing horsemen. Then all was quiet until a voice called, "Phebe! Cicely! are you safe? Open to us."

With a glad cry Cicely hastened to unbar the door. A tall young man in shabby green hunting shirt strode in. He caught sight of Phebe with a smoking pistol in her hand. She had fired wildly, and her shot had only hit a corner of the window sash.

"Well, Cousin Phebe," said the newcomer, "when did you join the army?"

"Oh, Lloyd! Lloyd!" cried Cicely, "where did you come from? Are they gone? Are we safe?"

"Safe as any one can be in these times," he replied with his soft drawl.

"What's all this about? Is John here? John Tucker?"

"Yes, wounded, and lying in the next room," Cicely informed him.

Lloyd nodded. "I was right, then; when he did not return with the despatches Captain De Witt expected from his wife, we suspected something wrong, and two of us started out on a scouting expedition. I got a clew at one of the farmhouses where they had seen him galloping by toward the river. I fancied he must have gotten across, and was likely to come in this direction."

"And did you know 'twas Kitty with him, and that 'twas she who carried the despatches?"

"No. Mistress Kitty, was it?" Lloyd looked around, but Kitty had fled.

"Kitty, Kitty, where are you?" called Cicely, and a shy, blushing face, framed in fair hair, peeped from behind the rude stairway which led to the garret. "Come, Kitty, and greet our deliverer," said

Cicely, and then — was it alone the rosy dawn which lighted up the face of the girl and the young Marylander, as they clasped hands?

"Tell us, Lloyd, about the search for John," Cicely said.

"We crossed the river, at the point where John did, at least I suppose so, or maybe further up. I followed the road through the woods, and saw the fresh tracks of a horse in the soft ground, and when we were within a few rods of the house we saw four men; one was climbing in the window as we rode up. I shouted, "Come on, boys," and we rode furiously as if we were a legion. We had a little pistol practice. Your man at the window was hit, and the others were not long in galloping off, taking their wounded companion with them. So you have our tale."

"Some vile Tory must have found out that John was here, and banded with others to capture him," Kitty decided.

Phebe had seated herself on the floor by the side of Don's quiet body. She had gathered the dog's noble head in her lap, and her silent tears were dropping on his soft coat.

"We have lost one of our best friends," said Cicely, in a choking voice. "He defended us to the last."

"PHEBE HAD SEATED HERSELF ON THE FLOOR BY THE SIDE OF DON'S QUIET B

Phebe looked up with wet eyes. She raised her hand tremblingly. "That lies at your doors, ye oppressors," she said in a low tone; "who shall give back this faithful life! and who shall restore to John his sturdy arm? Avenge us, O Lord, avenge us!"

Kitty shrank closer to Cicely. There was something almost Sibylline in Phebe's voice and attitude, showing how intensely she felt the occasion. But Lloyd's cheerful tones broke in, "That fire's getting mighty low, Cicely; shan't I throw on a few logs?"

"Yes, do, you have ridden far, and must be hungry."

"You're right; it's been so long since I was anything else but hungry, I most forget how it feels, and yes, it's right smart of a way to camp."

"We can't offer you much, only some porridge or a johnny-cake and some stewed pumpkin," Cicely told him.

"Good enough, so long as there is plenty of it," returned Lloyd. He stooped over and smoothed Don's fine, silky ears, then, at a look from Kitty, he lifted the body and gently laid it in the corner, throwing his cloak over it. Then he opened the door and went out, returning soon with a young man of about his own age.

"My friend Sam Stone," he presented him. "A Maryland boy and a neighbor of mine."

Soon a pot of porridge was bubbling over the fire, a johnny-cake browning its sides before the red coals, while the fumes from a tea-pot gave evidence that some sort of a decoction was in preparation.

"'Tis only sage tea," Cicely told them, "but it is warming."

"Better than none," Lloyd said, cheerfully.

"Are you not tired from your long ride?" Kitty asked the young men.

"Tired? No, indeed; Sam and I have ridden further in the course of a fox-hunt. And many a day have we stood in the water up to our waists for hours when we were out duck-shooting. And often have ridden to a party some twenty miles or more away, and kept the fun going at a lively rate till midnight. We Eastern Shore boys are used to being in the saddle. Out-of-door life suits us, although we don't call our camp life a very jolly one. We do our best to keep up our end of the line, don't we, Sam?" And Lloyd's happy little chuckle gave evidence that he was by no means pessimistic. "Hurry up those corn dodgers, Cicely," he went on. "The smell of them is 'most too much for me; I'll snatch one directly."

Cicely examined the browning surfaces. "They are about done," she decided. "Sit by, friends." And

around the frugal board in the dingy little kitchen the young people gathered, Mrs. Gardner joining them after a few moments.

"We found some hay and a bit of corn out yonder," said Sam, "and we took the liberty of using some of it for our horses. We have stabled them in your little cow-shed where we found another horse."

"Yes, that is John's. Since we have no cow 'tis good to have a shed to shelter the horses of our friends," said Mrs. Gardner.

"We can let them rest and start back by noon," said Lloyd. "I must see John; and you, Miss Kitty, if you will intrust your packet to us, we will try to see that it reaches its destination."

"But how shall I get back to Philadelphia to my mother," said Kitty.

Lloyd was silent for a moment. "Sam can take your packet, and if you will allow me I will escort you home."

"You? 'Twill be dangerous."

"You have a pass?"

"Yes."

"May I see it?"

Kitty produced it. Lloyd scanned it carefully. Then he spread it out on the table. "Here," he said, "is our chance. There is room after *bearer*

on this line for the word *and*. On the next line we add — what?"

"Sister," suggested Kitty.

"Sister?" repeated Lloyd, in sly inquiry.

"Sister," repeated Kitty, emphatically.

"So be it. Then I will borrow John's red coat, and —"

"One sleeve is gone."

"Never mind. A cloak will hide it. We may not need the pass if we can manage to flank the pickets. At any rate with it we can slip into town without a fear."

"But once in the city how will you get out?"

"Why think about that part before we are ready for it? The thing now is to get in, and the getting out will come after. Let us not borrow trouble," he added with his ready laugh.

Kitty did not realize the risk he was taking, both as regarded his relations to the enemy should they capture him, and to his own party should he be found within the British lines. But his chivalry toward a woman swept away all other considerations, and he did not hesitate in his undertaking.

After burying poor Don with honors, they set out, crossed the river in safety, left Sam to make his way to camp, and then proceeded toward the British lines.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE RED SLEEVE.

SAM had no sooner left them than Kitty's companion looked at her over his shoulder as she sat behind him on a pillion.

"My watch-paper," he said.

"'Tis safe."

"May I have it?"

"Now? I cannot give it to you just here, for 'tis at home."

"Then when we reach there you will return it."

"Yes, but do you intend to take me to my mother? To the very door?"

"To the very door. If my strong desire to see you safely returned is not sufficient protection, my scarlet coat is."

"I owe you another debt. You saved us, to-day, from that Tory band."

"Must it always be a game of give and take? 'Tis the part of a man to succor and protect the ladies. 'Tis to his shame that he ever permits their protection of him."

"Shame? No shame if he be weak and ill."

"No; but all the more must he do many deeds to her one, to prove his valor. I am always your debtor to the end of my life, be that near or far. Let us not speak more of my deeds which are my duties only."

"We need not war over our words, need we? I still cannot forget that you risked your life for me and for my father."

"A soldier's life is one of risks. 'Tis his daily expectation that they must come. Let us say no more, then, Miss Kitty. Your turn may come next. Who knows? Here we approach the lines. We must go carefully."

The picket was some yards away. Lloyd waved his hand, shouted something indistinguishable, and cantered on, with the utmost assurance. His red sleeve reassured the man, who, fancying he had given the password, allowed him to proceed.

At the second picket the order was demanded, but Lloyd was so self-possessed and unconcerned in his demeanor that no suspicions were aroused, and they went on their way, entering the city without any difficulty.

"Sister," said Lloyd, "we are safe."

"Brother, I hope you are."

"Never mind me. I have been through the lines

into the city before, and have now stronger attractions than ever to come again. This is the house, I believe, Mistress Kitty."

"How do you know?"

"I have seen it before; and yonder window overlooking the garden is your own."

"How do you know that?"

"On summer evenings sometimes you lean out and look toward the west, and on winter nights you do not draw your curtain before you look up at the stars.

"How do you know that?" repeated Kitty.

He laughed, and lifted her down carefully.

"You will go in?" she asked. "Some one shall come and look to your horse."

"I will go and meet your mother, if it please you."

Kitty led the way into the drawing-room. As she turned to leave Lloyd there, he reminded her, "The watch-paper, you will not forget it."

She nodded, and ran upstairs to her mother's room. It was vacant. Evidently Mrs. De Witt was not at home. Kitty went to her own room, and, from a quaint little wooden box, took the watch-paper, which was wrapped in silver paper. She was in haste, for she dreaded leaving Lloyd alone, not knowing who might come in. On her way downstairs she inquired of the whereabouts of her mother, and learned that her

surmise was correct: Mrs. De Witt and Mrs. Rush had both gone out. She was relieved to hear it; and since the officers, who had been quartered in the house, had found other lodgings, she felt that Lloyd's good luck had made all plain sailing for him.

Entering the drawing-room, she saw that Lloyd had thrown off his cloak, and his scarlet coat, minus one sleeve, disclosed his green hunting-shirt below. Kitty held out her silver paper package.

Lloyd smilingly received it. "Give me the fairest rose in the land, and give me liberty or give me death," he said softly. And he opened the package, exposing to view the watch-paper.

A slight noise attracted Kitty's attention. She turned her head. Behind her stood some one in full British uniform. "Who is this fellow?" came the sudden question.

Kitty started. It was Christopher Van Ness who spoke.

"Present me to your friend," said Lloyd, calmly, without making an effort to escape.

"This is my mother's brother, Mr. Van Ness," said Kitty, in half-audible tones. "And this, Christopher, is —" she hesitated.

"Lloyd Holliday," said the other, bowing.

"Of what service? Yours is a singular uniform.

What company is it which wears one green and one red sleeve?" said Christopher.

"Perhaps one made up of half Hessians and half Englishmen," returned Lloyd, with a little smile.

"And what can be said of a soldier in his majesty's service who repeats with such unction, 'Give me liberty or give me death?'" continued Christopher, pressing his inquiries.

"Faith, sir, you are of a curious mind. If he be a prisoner in the hands of the Americans, I warrant you he has reason to repeat the words with unction."

"Are you, then, a prisoner?"

Lloyd bowed in Kitty's direction. "Yonder is my jailor."

"A truce to these pleasantries," said Christopher, impatiently. "A straightforward answer to a straightforward question. Who are you? What do you here? What is your service?"

Lloyd stood imperturbably looking at the young man. "Your friend is choleric, and without a sense of humor, Mistress Kitty," he said nonchalantly.

"I suspect you. You are a spy," cried Christopher, laying his hand suddenly on Lloyd's shoulder.

With one swift movement, Lloyd's arm straightened out, and Christopher lay sprawling on the floor. As he struggled to his feet he saw that the room was empty.

It was to the garden that Lloyd and Kitty had taken flight, for Kitty had grasped Lloyd's hand, and had hurried him through the hall out a side door and down the garden path to the stable yard. "No one is about, thank Heaven," she whispered. "Here, Lloyd, here, this will be a safe retreat for the present. Christopher may give the alarm to have the place searched, and this, I think, will be a safe place." She lifted the cover from a large hogshead, which in summer-time served to catch rain-water, but which in this winter weather was not used. Into this Lloyd sprang, and Kitty, putting on the cover, hastily saying that she would come to his aid later, ran back to the house by another way, and fled to her room, where she expected Christopher would seek her.

She was right in her conjecture, for she had hardly entered there before Christopher, full of rage, sought her out.

"Who was that fellow?" he demanded.

"He gave you his name."

"What was he doing here?"

"He had the goodness to escort me home."

"From where? You were not here when I arrived last night. Where were you?"

"With friends. Is it so unusual an occurrence for me to spend a night with Mary Zane, or the Red-

monds? You go too far, Master Van Ness. Who gave you a right to inquire into my goings and comings? My mother knew of my absence."

"Did she? Then I suppose it is all right; but zounds! Kitty, when I saw you giving my watch-paper — ah, never fear but that I recognized it — when I saw you g'ving that to this fellow, I was beside myself."

"You were beside a most disagreeable and rude person, then," returned Kitty, breathing more freely as she saw that Christopher had been successfully put off the track.

The lad's face fell. "See here, Kitty," he said, "I know you have despised me because I wouldn't come out and show my colors. Now I have done it I don't see why I'm not as good as any other fellow in his majesty's service. That other one has your favor, for all his red coat. I owe him more than one grudge, and I'll settle with him yet. I will prove to you that I am as good a man as he. Why can't you smile on me, Kitty?"

"I will do more."

"What? What?"

"Laugh at you," replied Kitty, turning on her heel.

Christopher stood discomfited.

"Ah, Kitty," he spoke up, "and I thought to please you so, by bringing you your Lady Gay."

"My Lady Gay?"

"Yes, she is now in the stable. I brought her with me, letting brother William believe I should use her in the service. But, Kitty, I thought only of your pleasure. And there is she, for your use alone. I thought we should have many pleasant rides together, you so happy with your pet, and I so happy with you; for, even if I am a redcoat, I thought —" He paused. He had tried faithfully to please; it did seem hard.

But Kitty, beyond a low "Thank you, Christopher," which, indeed, was the least she could say, made no comment. She was disturbed; half annoyed at his persistence, half touched by his devotion.

He left her feeling that he had just cause for grievance. Surely he deserved better treatment. He wondered what had become of his rival. His suspicions were but half allayed, and he resolved to find out more of this pretentious young man. "To be sure," thought he, "if he be really a brother soldier in our service, his anger at my calling him a spy was justified, but if he be really a spy, well, Master Holliday, look out."

It was dark by the time Mrs. Rush returned, and then without her sister. "Law, Kitty," she exclaimed, "your mother has gone to hunt you up. She thought you with little Mary Zane, or maybe with the Redmonds. She was meaning to tell you to remain if you

wished, for that she meant to go to see your Aunt Joanna. Christopher shall take her word of your return; or perhaps you would best go with him to her."

Kitty cast about for an excuse. How could she leave Lloyd in his hiding-place? "I am sore weary to-night," she said. "Let Christopher go alone. I will send a message by him, and my mother will be satisfied that I am safe with you, where, indeed, I would much rather be than with Aunt Joanna."

Mrs. Rush laughed. "You are none too eager to visit your Aunt Joanna, I see, and I scarce wonder. She is sharper than ever since she has her good-natured Hessian to lead around by the nose. Fierce! my faith, but she is fierce! I hope her disposition to fight with her tongue is not a family trait, else my sister may not expect peace even when the war is over."

Kitty smiled. "My father is most gentle," she replied. "I scarce can remember that he ever spoke harshly to me. He fights his battles otherwise than by words."

"That is well. Get your missive ready and Christopher shall take it. I'm glad the boy is here; I can make him useful. Then get you ready for dinner. We have an officer who will take up his quarters with us for a time. A kindly and courteous gentleman he is, Colonel Savile by name. You must take

your mother's place and make pretty speeches to him."

Kitty felt that she was learning to be a diplomat. She would make herself agreeable, and try to give them no reason to believe she felt anxious about anything or anybody; but all throughout the meal she thought of poor Lloyd in his uncomfortable hiding-place.

However, she laughed and chatted and was more sprightly than Mrs. Rush had ever seen her. She gave the girl a little affectionate pat as they returned to the drawing-room. "Good child," she said, "you have quite won the old colonel's heart."

Then Kitty suddenly thought of a plea to escape. "Oh," she said, "did you know that, after all, I have my Lady Gay again? She was sent to Mr. William Van Ness for safe keeping, and Christopher brought her with him."

"Yes, I knew, and I'm glad of it. Christopher has so often wished that you had your own horse, and Aaron shall see that she is well cared for here."

"Thank you, dear Mrs. Rush. And may I not go out and speak to her? She is so sensible, and I am sure cannot have forgotten me. I should so like to see her to-night, for, as yet, I have not given her a word!"

"To be sure you shall go. Aaron has the keys. There are two or three of the colonel's horses in the stable, so see that your Lady Gay is comfortably established."

Aaron's orders about giving up the key were very strict, and it was only when Mrs. Rush gave the order herself, to let Kitty have free access to the stable whenever she wanted, that Aaron was willing to pass over the keys to her.

"You'd better go with her, Aaron," said Mrs. Rush, as she passed out of the kitchen, where Aaron was eating his supper.

"Oh, no," Kitty spoke up quickly; "if I have a lantern I shall not mind. Don't let me take Aaron from his meal. I should much rather not."

"Have your own way, then," said Mrs. Rush.

"I wish I had an apple for my Lady Gay," Kitty said to the cook.

"In the pantry there are some," said Susan. "Shall I get you one, Miss Kitty?"

"No, I can get it. You go on with your supper, Susan; but tell me where they are, and I can find them."

And Kitty with scarlet cheeks stepped into the pantry. Here was the chance for which she had longed. She could hide more food under her cloak,

go out by the side door, and no one would suspect anything wrong.

The stars were shining brightly overhead. The garden paths were hard and bare. She ran rapidly to the stable yard, trusting no one would see her. But if some one should want one of the other horses! Her heart stood still at the thought. Christopher, fortunately, was off on his errand; the colonel, with a friend, was sipping Mrs. Rush's Madeira. So Kitty found all quiet. She raised the lid of the hogshead. "Lloyd," she whispered.

The young man straightened himself up with a sigh of relief.

"Are you very cold? Has it seemed long?" asked Kitty.

"Weeks, and I am pretty stiff, and rather hungry. I've had a turn or two in the garden; but that I had promised you to remain here, I think I should have cut and run."

"To find some one outside watching to capture you. Come and follow me."

"To the ends of the earth."

"I only want you to go as far as the stable. I have the keys. You can get into the hay, and find a comfortable place to sleep, and here I have some food for you."

"How useful you would be to send out with a foraging party," he exclaimed. "Zounds! but I never tasted such victuals, it seems to me. Meat, a pasty, cakes; why, Kitty, this is a royal feast."

"I hope they won't miss it," she laughed. "But if they do they will never suspect me. Now, off with your coat, and give it to me. Your cloak, which you left in the drawing-room, has mysteriously disappeared. I suspect Christopher has taken it as a means of identifying you. Alas! I fear 'twas very foolhardy for you to bring me home. You cannot go forth into the streets, even at night, clad in a coat with one sleeve missing. Give me the coat, and rest you quietly here till I come again. I must lock you in. Good night."

"One word more, Kitty. Ah! how sweet and good you are."

"No, no, I must not stay. I shall be missed. They will wonder why I tarry so long. I came, they suppose, to speak to my Lady Gay, and Aaron thinks your horse belongs to the colonel who has taken up his lodging here. So good night," and rolling up the coat, she sped back again, and managed to reach her room, undiscovered. Once there she felt sure of being undisturbed.

She unrolled the scarlet coat. The jagged edges

of the shoulder showed where the sleeve had been hastily cut out that John's wounded arm might receive attention. She sat with the coat in her lap, looking at it meditatively. Then a smile dimpled her face, and she stole downstairs, returning presently with a second red coat in her hand.

"This will do it," she said to herself. "I'll rip out the sleeve from this coat of Christopher's, and set it in the other. Christopher will think I have played a trick on him, — or will he? Never mind, I will do it. One cannot be over particular these times. I might, perhaps, take the coat as it is, and give it to Lloyd, but I have some conscience left, and I'll not pilfer wholesale."

After carefully ripping out the bits of cloth that still clung to John's coat, she laid it aside, under her chair, and began on the coat she had purloined from Christopher's room. All this took some time, and she became so absorbed in her work that she did not realize how time had flown, nor did she hear a gentle tap at the door, for, just at that moment, she dropped her scissors. As she picked them up, she raised her eyes, and Christopher stood before her.

"Why — why, I didn't hear you," she stammered.

"I knocked, and thought you said, 'Come in.' I saw the light shining under your door, and knew that

you must be up. I have an answer to your note. Your mother wanted you to have it to-night, and I hurried back with it."

"You must have hurried."

"Yes, I did. But — why, Kitty, is that my coat? What are you doing with it?"

The hot color flushed up to the roots of Kitty's hair. She was completely nonplussed for a moment. Christopher regarded her steadfastly.

"There is a slight rip here," she said, recovering herself.

"And you are mending it for me? How good of you. Kitty, you are not such an enemy as you pretend, after all." He looked mightily pleased. This accounted for that vivid blush, he thought. "Don't bother over it to-night," he added. "Come downstairs into the drawing-room."

"No, I do not care to; I am tired."

"Yet you would sit up to do this for me." Christopher looked even more complacent. She regretted her harshness to him, no doubt. She was glad, after all, to see him, and was trying to make amends for her sharp speeches.

"Well, anyhow," he said, gently taking the coat from her, "I shall not let you sit up to do this for me. I'll have old Tabitha do it to-morrow. She

always does my mending for me. Go to bed, Kitty. Good night, and pleasant dreams." And he went off, bearing the coat in his hand.

Here was a pretty kettle of fish! Kitty felt quite humiliated by Christopher's gentleness and lack of suspicion. "If he only knew," she said to herself, "how furious he would be. I feel a hypocrite to receive his gratitude. What can I do? What can I do?" She drew out the other coat from under the chair. "How lucky that I put it there!" she exclaimed. "Oh, my mother's note! I have not read it."

She picked it up from the floor, where it had fallen, and read:—

"It gave me joy to know of your safe return, dear Kitty. I am here on a business errand. Perhaps, after all, you would best not come. I will return as soon as I can. What hours of suspense I passed till I learned that you were safe! I long to see you. I dare not write more, for Christopher is waiting. Your devoted mother."

Kitty's own note had contained only the few words: "I have returned safe and sound. Will tell you all when I see you."

"Dearest little mother," said Kitty, as she put down the note; "she has some plan afoot. I wonder what.

Well, I must get along without her. And now what next? To secure my tell-tale door and my windows, I think." So she covered the betraying cracks, thinking: "Lloyd cannot stay long in hiding, or he will be discovered. What can I do? What can I do? Ah!" Her eye fell on her scarlet cloak lying on the bed. She snatched it up, and, without a moment's hesitation, proceeded to cut from it, as well as she could, a sleeve to fit the coat. The color matched quite near enough.

But it was no easy job; and she toiled over it, in her inexperienced way, till fingers and head ached, and the night was far spent. Finally, too tired to set another stitch, she put out her candle and went to bed, but not before a thought occurred to her which set her at ease as to Lloyd's escape.

"I can do it. I know I can!" she said, as her eyelids drooped over her tired eyes.

CHAPTER XIV.

A COUNTERSIGN.

KITTY slept late the next morning, but managed during the day to finish the sleeve and set it in the coat.

"It will do," she said, viewing it with satisfaction. "It may not be exact, but 'twill never be seen on a galloping horse, and the color is very near. And now to my old colonel. I must wheedle him. Ah, me! am I not learning to be a sad, sad, deceitful girl! But it is for you, my father, and for you, my — country."

When she heard the Englishman's hearty voice in the hall below, she went to the drawing-room, from which the tinkling sound of the spinnet coming told her that Mrs. Rush was entertaining the gentlemen.

There were several officers standing about as Kitty entered. "Here is our little lass," said Colonel Savile to a gentleman near him. It does me good to see so fresh and fair a face. She is like our English girls. I find the Philadelphia lasses are a

little pale. Is she not like my daughter Winifred, Sir William?"

"Quite like."

"She hails from New York, and a lively little body she is. We must have you to a rout, my dear. And I will lead you out myself if you will take an old man for a gallant, Miss Kitty."

Kitty cast him a winning glance from her clear blue eyes. "I should like such a gallant much better than a young rattlepate," she replied. "I like better a companion who can be sensible."

"Ho! ho!" laughed the colonel's friend. "A rare coquette is this. Take care, colonel, or you'll be giving your daughter a stepmother younger than herself. Will you sing for us, Miss Kitty, or play us a tune, since your aunt has left the spinnet?"

"Those are not my accomplishments, but I can cut you a fairly pretty watch-paper. I am not a talented maid, I fear, but I can use a brush and scissors better than my voice."

"Can you? Then I claim the promise of a watch-paper," returned the colonel.

"And I, too," remarked Sir William. "Mine first, colonel."

"I bow to my superior officer," said Colonel Savile,

laughing. "This is Sir William Howe, as perhaps you already know, Miss Kitty."

"General Howe is too well known to be unfamiliar to me," she said, making a low courtesy; "and if it please him I will cut him my prettiest watch-paper this very day."

"And in return — what compliment can we pay her, Savile?" said Sir William.

The colonel pondered. "You might name your favorite horse for her," he said, laughing.

Kitty's heart was beating fast, but she replied, as if a trifle offended: "No; that is scarce a compliment. 'Tis Kitty here, and Kitty there, with every farmer who drives a wagon to market. I will tell you" — she paused, scarcely able to give voice to her daring. "I will be quite satisfied if you will allow me to name the password this night." She looked up smiling at Sir William.

"An easy thing to grant," he answered, smiling back at her. "The officer of the day shall have immediate notice of my desire in the matter." He pulled out his watch. "There is time enough yet. And what shall the word be?"

"Savile," replied Kitty, demurely.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the general. "It is plain to see who is the favorite here. As pretty a compli-

ment as I ever knew offered by a dame at court. 'Savile' shall the password be, and 'tis a pretty conceit which costs nothing."

"Except perhaps a young life," thought Kitty, as she thanked the gentlemen in the most gracious words she could find. And they, little dreaming of how she had schemed to bring this about, laughed and joked with her as they took their departure.

As soon as possible Kitty made her escape to the stable, taking opportunity of Aaron's eating his luncheon, for she well knew the old fellow hated to be disturbed at meal-time. Her scarlet cloak no longer could be put to use, but she threw over her a warm wrap of her mother's, hiding beneath the red coat. Up to the hay-loft she climbed, disturbing a meditative hen sitting on her nest, and almost stepping on a motherly cat with a family of mewing kittens. From the top of the ladder she called softly, "Lloyd."

A dark head popped up from the hay.

"It's Kitty," said the girl. "Come out, I must speak to you. Here are some provisions, and here is your coat, with a pair of sleeves. No, never mind how the second one was supplied. Put the coat on, and while Aaron is at dinner and the gentlemen still over their wine, I will come out with the key and

let you out. The password is 'Savile.' Forget it not. 'Savile.'"

"I will not forget it, but how—"

"Never mind asking how I happen to know it, but so it is. I'll see that your saddle and some provisions are in the stall for you. You have your pistols. Are they loaded?"

"Yes. I looked to that."

"Then you can ride out freely. I may not be able to do more than unlock the stable door for you, for it is to our interest that I am indoors to intercept the gentlemen if they require their horses. So, good-by, and may you have a safe journey."

"Kitty! Kitty!" The young man stood up looking at her. "What an angel of goodness you are to me."

Kitty began laughing, somewhat hysterically.

"Why do you flout me?"

"You look so funny with your hair full of hay, and your clothes all wispy," she answered, turning off her real emotion.

He smilingly flicked off the bits of hay, but looked quite grave a moment after. "You know that I shall now go to rejoin my regiment. I volunteered to take the despatches to Valley Forge when my term of enlistment expired, and so I have been free to scour the country as I pleased; but my coming within the enemy's

lines was hardly allowable. However, I think I can prove it was to some purpose. Do not look so serious, Kitty. It will be all right. Must this be farewell? God bless you, Kitty, Kitty."

He stooped and kissed her hand, and she made her way to the ladder, waving him back when he would have helped her down. She stopped to rub Lady Gay's soft nose, and to give her a bit of sugar, encountering Aaron just as she was going out.

"You're mightily fond of that mare of yours, Miss Kitty," he said.

"So I am, and so would you be, Aaron, of a creature which so reminded you of your happy home. An only child, such as I am, cares more for her pets than does one who has a host of sisters and brothers."

"I shouldn't wonder if that were true, miss. Well, she's a pretty beast, and takes fancies, like all of 'em. She's fonder of that long-nosed black horse in the stall next her, than of any. Strange Colonel Savile never rides that black, and he's a good 'un."

"I think," said Kitty, slowly, "that he belongs to one of the younger men, and my aunt is but stabling him for a while. You needn't be surprised if you find him gone, 'most any day."

She went on to the house, and spent a restless afternoon, but arrayed herself for dinner in her most becom-

ing gown, a pale pink lutestring over a petticoat of shimmering green. Very young girls dressed quite like their elders in those days, and even very young children wore stiff stays. So Kitty, when she went down to dinner, presented quite a grown-up appearance.

She produced Sir William's watch-paper, for he had accepted an invitation to dine with the family; and at sight of Kitty's gift, Christopher leaned over and whispered: "You are very free with your watch-papers, Miss Kitty, but I am not jealous of Sir William. I have discovered something which I will tell you after a while."

Lest he should see the sudden fear in her eyes, she turned her head away, but she waited, in trepidation, for him in the drawing-room after dinner. She sought a secluded corner, where no one might overhear them.

"What have you discovered?" she asked lightly, as she made room for him at her side. "That I am in love with the colonel?"

"No; but that there is no Lloyd Holliday in his Majesty's service. So that it is either an assumed name, or the man is a rebel spy."

"What penetration! Suppose — suppose he were a rebel, as you call him, would not the fact of his being my friend protect him from you? Would you give over one who had saved my father from danger,

to such horrors as the prisons here, to such jailors as Cunningham and Loring? Or would you condemn to an ignoble death one who had protected me from insolence, and who loves life as well as you do?" She felt so safe, with Lloyd, at this moment, ready to escape.

Christopher was silent for a minute. "You press me hardly, Kitty," at last he replied; "you would never forgive me if I discovered him and gave him up."

"Never, while I lived."

Christopher looked grave, but Kitty laughed a little nervously, "Well, supposing is very easy. Let us not suppose anything in this case." Her ears were strained to catch the sound of a horse's hoofs going out the stable yard. "I but tried you."

"Nevertheless, if the case were no supposition, you would not forgive me."

"I have told you, never, never."

He rose to his feet, and walked toward the door.

"Ah, Christopher, come back," Kitty called to him. "I have something to say to you."

"I cannot stop now."

"But —"

"Another time."

"One moment," she ran after him and caught him

by the sleeve; "what sort of a watch-paper should you like?"

"I'll think, and tell you later; will you make me one, after all? How good of you. I must hurry off. I'll tell you to-morrow."

She shivered as he turned to the door leading to the garden, and as he closed it, she shook like a leaf, holding her clasped hands over her heart, and listening — listening.

A few minutes later there was the sound of a grating gate, a horse's hoofs sounded along the drive. Kitty returned to the drawing-room, and went toward the window. "'Tis but Christopher going out," said Mrs. Rush, looking up from her book.

"Oh!" was all that Kitty said. But a second horseman passed out a little later, and Kitty was not easy.

"The watch-paper," said Christopher the next morning, "shall be an open gate, and behind it a true heart surrounded with forget-me-nots. Shall I tell you why?"

Kitty nodded, her eyes fixed on his face.

"Because last night, as I went to the stable to get my horse, I found the key already in the lock, and before I could enter the door swung open, and there rode out a man in our uniform."

"You stopped him?" Kitty's very lips were pale.

"No, I did not even look at his face, for not knowing who it was I could better let him go. Otherwise I might have failed in my duty, and — if — you would not have forgiven me, Kitty."

She sat very still, and when she raised her eyes they were full of tears. "You shall have the watch-paper," she said, "and it shall be the very prettiest I can make."

But just then came old Tabitha to say, "Mrs. De Witt has just come in, Miss Kitty, and would like to see you in her room." Therefore Kitty rushed off upstairs to throw herself in her mother's arms.

"Ah, my dear, my dear, did you but know how troubled I have been for you," said Mrs. De Witt. "Indeed, when you did not return that evening, I was so distraught that I feared every one around knew our secret, and at every sound I started so nervously that my sister noticed it, and therefore, lest I betray myself, and so bring trouble on us all, I betook myself to where I could be in direct communication with those near the lines. I knew not a single incident would escape our Aunt Joanna; but when I heard nothing of you, and knew not what had happened, ah, then, I was in despair. Tell me all, Kitty; I am most eager to know."

Then Kitty unburdened herself of her news.

"Poor John! poor John!" Mrs. De Witt shook her head sadly. "Ah, Kitty, is it not all a sad time? And how courageous you were. Such a soldier is my Kitty." She fondled the girl's pretty fair hair lovingly. "The dangers increase," she went on, "but my love, we must be all the more guarded in our speech. The British cannot, and must not know the condition of our soldiers at camp: for days with scarce food enough to keep them alive, wood so scarce that a small fire is a luxury. And who could be comfortable in those little huts? The feet of our brave men leave bloody tracks upon the snow, and so desperate are they about getting stores to camp, that the men who are strongest harness themselves to the wagons, as if they were beasts of burden, that they may draw to the needy some of those supplies which lie in the woods untouched for want of horses to transport them." She paused and pressed her hands over her eyes, then looked around the room. "And we sit here in comfort! Kitty, can you realize it? Your father, my husband, hungry, cold, miserable! Oh, think not he has complained to me. 'Twas another told me all this. Listen, Kitty, do you wonder that I keep silent, and seem to be unconcerned? I will tell you why. My brother William has my

property in his care. He is a bitter Tory, as you know. If he knew that I spent my money in relieving the patriot army, he would deliberately allow all I have to fall into the hands of the British, feeling himself warranted in so disposing of the goods of a rebel. So you see, to enjoy my means, to help your father, I must even pretend that my sympathies are with his enemies. Christopher and Lavinia watch me, but more so does your Aunt Joanna, who is incensed against her own family. Now Kitty, dear, I know you will help me to maintain an indifferent mien. I never array myself in gay apparel but I feel self-condemned. Yet I must do it to maintain the position I assume. Do you understand your mother now?"

"Ah, mother, I do. You are brave, brave, to do so."

"No, no. I am a coward still, but I love your father, Kitty. He was my hero when I was younger than you."

Kitty opened her eyes in surprise.

Her mother laid the girl's hand against her cheek. "Yes, younger than you. Then he married your mother, and I after a while married Richard Gillespie. So — but never mind, we will not go over it all, but you can see, Kitty, mine is not a recent feeling.

But, tell me; solve a mystery. Why in the world do I find bits of scarlet cloth on the floor? and why is your scarlet cloak so hacked into?"

Kitty dropped her eyes. She had left out part of her story, but now she told it falteringly.

"A brave lad," said Mrs. De Witt, "but a little too venturesome. And Christopher, poor boy. Poor little brother, yet he is an honest and an honorable one I see. Ah me, how by contraries do things go in this world. But now we must bethink ourselves of what to wear to-night at the City Tavern. Lavinia says you promised to go."

"Ah, I had forgotten that. Yes, I promised the colonel to go."

"I, too, have promised, for it seemed best. We will laugh with the redcoats, Kitty, while our hearts are aching for those by the lonely camp-fires. Such is the irony of it. Come, we'll look so sorry as to cause wonderment, if we keep up this strain. Let me see how pretty I can make you look. A string of pearls for you," — she opened her casket, — "and blue is the color with them. We'll go a-shopping, perhaps, and that will divert us and my sister as well. You will need one or two things which you are now without. Let me see, I must have my hair done in the latest fashion, which is a monstrous pile, is it not? And I'll

wear my gayest amber-colored brocade which my sister so admires."

So to the rout did they go, and Kitty laughed with Tarleton and André, gay young gallants, so ready for any kind of fun which should while away the tedium of their garrison life in the quiet Quaker town.

But to Colonel Savile did Kitty give her preference; and the courtly old fellow led her out, bowing and stepping as featly as the youngest there, to the tune of the old-fashioned and stately minuet.

Christopher was in high feather. He felt that his star was in the ascendant, for that afternoon had Kitty devoted herself to the making of the watch-paper. Open gate, transfixed heart, forget-me-nots and all, rested safely in his watch-case, to the satisfaction of the lad, and to the benefit of his watch, which, lying on the soft paper, received fewer jars as the young man stepped gayly about the room.

"Is it not a gay scene?" he said to Kitty as he stood by her side, his rosy cheeks aglow with excitement and pleasure.

Kitty looked around wistfully. "Enemies all," she felt inclined to say, but she shook aside the thought and answered: "Gay, indeed. Does not my mother look well in her amber brocade? I think it is vastly becoming. How gayly Miss Redman is talking. Is

not that Miss Bingham yonder? and the other so vivacious: who is she?"

"You mean Miss Rebecca Franks, a saucy body she is. But there comes my friend Tarleton to fetch you," and Kitty was led away.

CHAPTER XV.

VENTURESOME YOUTH.

KITTY was enjoying the scene, and was standing by her mother's side looking at the merry company, when some one bowed before her. Brave he was in a blue silk coat, pearl-gray breeches, and black shoes with silver buckles. Kitty started, and almost cried out in amazement, but the seriousness of the situation prevented, so she only whispered, "Lloyd!"

"May I have the honor of a promenade with you?" he asked as nonchalantly as if his being present were no matter of surprise.

With a whispered word to Mrs. De Witt the girl permitted herself to be led away. "But how dangerous! how dangerous!" she said under her breath. "How could you run such risks?"

"For the sake of seeing Mistress Kitty De Witt in her brave attire. You told me you had promised to be here to-night, and I wanted to be with you again. I shall go as soon as this is over."

She glanced shyly at his handsome figure, his pow-

dered wig, and lace ruffles. She had never before seen him dressed as a gentleman of fashion.

He laughed at her unexpressed curiosity. "I am sheltered by my Quaker friends, of whom you already know," he told her; "and this costume, alas, Kitty, it is not mine; 'tis hired."

"Yet —"

"Yet you think I wear it easily. Do you suppose I always wear a hunting-shirt?"

"No, but —" She was rather overpowered by this elegant-appearing young man who needed not her pity.

Suddenly she looked at him in consternation. "I forgot — Christopher is here. He may recognize you — and — oh, Lloyd, hurry, hurry away."

"Not while I am attending you. I think your Christopher will hardly recognize me. Where is he?"

"In that crowd at the end of the room, and he may recognize you."

"Let him. I shall have my promenade; else why take a risk at all?"

"Ah, but you are —"

"What? Foolhardy? Maybe; but what is worth having is worth some risks. How is Miss Gay?"

"Lady Gay?"

He nodded.

"She is well. I would I had a chance to send her

back to my father. When men must be beasts of burden, must I be riding around on horseback!"

"Ah, if all were like you, so unselfish, so devoted."

A turn in the room brought them too near others for them to continue serious talk, although the whole conversation had been in snatches.

"I will take her," said Lloyd, at the next opportunity.

"You? How can you?"

"I have still my red coat. 'Tis worth a great deal to me; and then my good friends, the Wrights, have no trouble in getting out into the country when they need. There are many ways to do these things if one but knows the ropes."

"I know not how you can be so venturesome."

"Do you fear for me? Then 'tis doubly a joy to make a dash and win. Do you really want to give up Lady Gay? Would it make you happier?"

"Oh, it would, dearly as I love her. I love my father more than any one in the world, and to help him would be a joy."

"Then if you'll leave the stable door open, at Aaron's supper-time to-morrow, I'll come get her, and I'll promise you your father shall have her, if I live. Can you manage your part?"

"I will, whether or no."

"If I might see you--"

"Perhaps."

"Then 'tis not a long farewell. Alas, that pleasures are of such short duration! I must be going."

"Who is Kitty's attendant?" said Mrs. Rush to her sister; "I never saw a prettier picture."

"Expect me not to remember the names of all Kitty's friends," returned Mrs. De Witt. "There, her cavalier has hardly left her before another seeks her hand. The child is not a wall-flower."

"A new face, if it be a pretty one, is always an attraction," replied Mrs. Rush, "and there is not a sweeter girl in the room, though some are more brilliant. But I must ask her who was the dark-eyed gallant in the blue coat. He mightily took my fancy as a courteous gentleman."

Later in the evening she put the question to Kitty, who hoped no one saw her color as she replied: "Law, Mrs. Rush, I cannot remember all the names of the gallants I have seen this evening. 'Tis my first rout, remember, and I am too excited to remember aught but to mind my manners."

"But he was so handsome you ought to remember him. He wore a sky-blue coat and pearl breeches."

"Point him out to me, then," said Kitty, recovering her self-possession. "There is a blue coat yonder, and methinks I have met the owner."

"'Tis not he. I see him nowhere. He must have gone. Well, no matter. He'll doubtless be on hand next week, since his air of devotion, as he bowed over your hand, was very genuine."

Kitty's heart beat freely. Christopher had not recognized Lloyd, and he was safely out of the room. But what a daring youth he was. She admired him the more for it. And now about Lady Gay; how could she explain her departure? As she was going home she turned the matter over in her mind. Between the curtains of her chair, she saw the foot-passengers hurrying home with their lanterns. Young soldiers, who preferred a supper at the Bunch of Grapes, to a more sober rout at the City Tavern, stepped gayly along singing snatches of song. Here and there a cloaked figure walked sombrely alone. It was one of the latter which stood at a little distance from Mrs. Rush's door as Kitty's chair stopped. Was it her imagination, or did she catch the wave of a hand, through the dimness, as she turned to look over her shoulder while she was going up the steps. At all events, the figure moved away at once.

But as Kitty cuddled down in bed, a sudden thought leaped to her brain, and she settled her night-capped head comfortably as she heard the watchman going his rounds, calling, "Midnight, and all is well."

"Mother!" she said, as she tiptoed out of her room, and crept under Mrs. De Witt's covers with her, the next morning. "Mother, are you awake?"

"Naturally, since you ask it," said Mrs. De Witt, hugging the little bedfellow up to her. "Why this unusually early visit? Has the excitement kept you awake all night?"

"Ah, no, but I have so much to say. First, will you do me a favor?"

"Why ask? You know the answer."

"Will you buy my Lady Gay from me, and give her to a soldier?"

"To whom? Christopher?"

"No, to father."

"Kitty, what are you talking about?"

Then Kitty told her of Lloyd's hazardous visit, and of his offer to carry off Lady Gay in safety to the American camp.

"How can he?" inquired Mrs. De Witt.

"That I do not know, but what he promises he will perform, and if I am asked where my horse is, I want to be able to say that I have sold her."

"Christopher will take it hardly that you kept it from him, and will want to know who has bought her."

"I shall tell him the negotiations were made through you," said Kitty, laughing.

"Then must I put him off the track? Well, I can do it; and I will buy your horse gladly, my sweeting, and will give you a gold piece for her."

"Which I shall send to camp at my very first opportunity."

"And which would find its way there anyhow, if not into the hands of our good friend Robert Morris. Good Mr. Morris, what he has done for his country is past telling, and indeed he has shown himself a friend to me in many ways. But I forget. I must not, even to you, call him friend, lest I speak out when I should not. And so you are willing to give up your Lady Gay whom you so love. It is a sacrifice. You are likely never to see her again. Have you thought of that?"

"Yes, but do not let us speak of it. I cannot think of that part of it. Let us talk of the rout, instead."

"Did you like it?"

"Ye-es. I could not help it."

"Who could, at sixteen?"

"But we do not have to go too often."

"Never again, unless you wish. I think once going establishes our reputation as Tories."

"Ah!"

"Yes, yes, that is why we went. But your reward for the sacrifice was greater than mine."

"How so?"

"You forget — or do you? — how very becoming are sky-blue coats to a certain manly figure."

"No, I don't forget, but it was scarcely a reward after all, for now I must give up Lady Gay."

"And we promised to say no more about it. Ah, my little Kitty, this patriotism means a continued call upon us for something we love."

Only once did Kitty visit Lady Gay that day, and then it was when the old hostler was at dinner. The tears which bedewed the mare's glossy chestnut mane no one saw, the quick sob no one heard, except Lady Gay herself, who rubbed her velvet nose against her mistress's shoulder, and whinnied.

"You'll be half-starved, perhaps dreadfully hurt, or killed, Lady Gay," said Kitty, brokenly, "but you must go, for my father's sake; for the sake of our country. And so good-by – good-by, my dearest pet," and passionately kissing the pretty creature she fled forth, leaving the key in the door, and, rushing to her room, she lay sobbing on her bed, her fingers stopping her ears lest they should hear the last sound of the horse's dainty hoofs. Nevertheless, she could not shut out the sound, altogether, of a grating gate and the crunching of gravel which told her when her horse was gone.

And so Lloyd's farewell was a long one, for he looked in vain for a little figure.

"She could not stand seeing her horse go, the dear girl," he said. "I've half a mind not to take her, but — well, a promise is a promise, and the cause of freedom before everything." So a day later Lady Gay appeared in the camp at Valley Forge, and between groups of half-naked men she was led up to an officer wearing a sort of dressing-gown made of a bed-blanket, one of many such queer-looking garments seen there, and there was Kitty's pet delivered over for her country's use.

But it was many a long day before Kitty should know more of the gallant and daring youth who had so successfully carried out his plan of getting through the British lines to deliver the chestnut mare to Captain De Witt.

To be sure, there came a little note to Kitty the next day. It was delivered by Abigail Wright to little Mary Zane, who informed Kitty that she had been asked to give it to her.

"Adieu, fairest and best," said the note. "I penetrate the cause of your non-appearance last night. and while my own disappointment was great, I could, nevertheless, smother it in reflecting upon your grief at parting with your pretty mare. Forget me not,

Kitty. If the fortunes of war favor us I shall return to you again, but I cannot do so at present, for I return to my regiment to reënlist at once, and my duty will not allow these pleasant, though somewhat risky, raids. Here is a sword-knot which my sister gave me when I left home. Will you keep it as a reminder of your faithful cavalier,

"LLOYD."

Kitty turned the twist of silk over in her hand and looked at it sadly, then she stooped and kissed the little bearer of the note, who, despite her Quaker self-repression, put her arms around her friend's neck and whispered, "I love thee, Kitty." Then she ran home as fast as her decorous Quaker training would permit her.

Jovial Joseph Rush had returned to his home that very day, and was sitting with some of the British officers in the drawing-room. The occupation of the British had not been the most fortunate thing for Mrs. Rush's establishment, as the wear and tear showed. Here was a sword-cut across a silk curtain; there was a deep dent in a polished table; a bit was broken from the finest ornament, and a gaping crack showed down the side of the handsomest chair, it having borne, once too often, the heavy weight of a burly officer.

Colonel Savile was tapping his snuff-box excitedly, and Mr. Rush's silver buckles swung restlessly below his plum-colored breeches. Evidently an interesting subject was being discussed. Kitty slipped into a corner, where one of the big Chippendale chairs stood, and listened to the talk. It was of La Fayette and the sympathy of France for the American cause.

"France will delight in an opportunity of humiliating Britain if she can," Colonel Savile was saying, "and that parvenu Benjamin Franklin seems to have created an impression over there. I believe France will undoubtedly consent to an alliance."

"The Marquis La Fayette has proved himself devotedly attached to the rebels," said Joseph Rush, "and, considering the rabble they are, I wonder at it."

"'Tis a young man's love of adventure," returned the colonel. "Enthusiasm misapplied, as is often the case with those as young as he."

"'Twill doubtless urge some serious measure on the part of the king," said another officer. "Some concessions might end the war."

Joseph Rush tapped the arm of his chair thoughtfully, and shook his head. "I doubt it, I doubt it," he remarked. "It is too late. With France to uphold them the colonies will fight it out. Well, gentlemen, we can only hope for a happy issue for our party, and

a speedy bringing to terms of the rebellious colonists. Will you join me in a toast to his majesty?" And each man present sprang to his feet and responded with a will to the words, "The king, God bless him!"

Then Kitty slipped out again; but she remembered later that at that very time a treaty of alliance was actually formed by France, and that, too, Lord North had already introduced into Parliament those bills which conceded to the Americans all that had been the cause of dispute. But, as Joseph Rush said, it was too late; and the war went on.

But to Philadelphia the announcement of the French alliance meant the withdrawal of the British troops from her borders; and those who had favored the loyalist cause made haste to pack up and leave the city, many going to New York, whither the new commander-in-chief, General Clinton, removed his army.

Mrs. Rush was busy storing her effects and getting ready to leave. She took it for granted that her sister would accompany her.

"'Twill be rather pleasant to be back in the home where we were born, will it not, Peggy?" she said. "I think I should never be a Philadelphian though I lived here a hundred years. This I think I shall wear to the Meschianza." She shook out a flowered gown. "What will your costume be?"

"I shall not go," replied Mrs. De Witt, quietly.

Mrs. Rush dropped her gown in surprise. "Not go? Why, 'twill be the finest show ever seen. And Kitty, why, she will never have such an opportunity again. Is it lack of means, Peggy? Pray let me be your banker till you can hear from brother William, or else wear some of your pretty clothes which are still so fresh and good. One does not need new gowns for every occasion."

Mrs. De Witt shook her head. "Neither Kitty nor I will go. And, sister, we are not going back to New York. We shall remain here."

"Peggy! I believe you are a rebel after all."

Mrs. De Witt was silent for a moment before she said, "Think as you like, Lavinia. When I married Paul De Witt it was for better or worse."

"Much worse, methinks, as matters look. What will William say? He looks for us all to be at home again."

Kitty's face, as she listened, looked a little wistful. She would dearly like to go to her own home again.

But it was not to be, and Mrs. De Witt's decision did indeed bring upon her certain loss, for Mr. William Van Ness indignantly threw over his charge of her affairs, and in the disturbed business troubles which resulted, Mrs. De Witt lost nearly everything.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MESCHIANZA.

BUT after all, Kitty was a witness of at least a part of that gay pageant called the Meschianza, for Christopher did so importune her. "But to look on," he begged. "There will be so many there that you will not be noticed."

"Thank you," she returned, amused.

"What a blunderer I am. I meant no slight to you, Kitty, but so many will be present to look on, that you would need take no prominent part. You know not how Whig and Tory join in their eagerness to see the sight. Never was such an entertainment this side the water. You have seen Mr. Joseph Wharton's place, Walnut Grove, where the family spend their summers; it is to be held there. I will show you one of the invitations." And he produced an invitation reading: —

"'The favor of your meeting the subscribers to the Meschianza at Knight's Wharf, near Pool's Bridge, to-morrow, at half-past three, is desired.'"

"But I have no desire to do honor to Sir William Howe, and 'tis in his praise the entertainment is given," came Kitty's objection.

"Never mind that part. You need have nothing to do with the praise. You know not how Major André has worked to help make the thing a success. He told me but yesterday of his labors. Seven Knights of the Blended Rose, seven of the Burning Mountain, to break lances in a tournament for their ladies, among whom will be Miss Auchmuty, whom you and I well know, since we are Trinity Church goers; Miss Smith and the Redman sisters. So you see, all will not be strangers to you. I would I were a knight, and you were one of the ladies."

Kitty laughed merrily. "What fol-de-rol. This is not the fifteenth century, nor do we dwell in mediæval castles. In sooth, it seems an ill time to me for such merrymaking, when war is abroad in the land."

That she was not, with her mother, his favorite sister, to return to New York, troubled Christopher not a little. The lad was honest and good-hearted, and plied Mrs. De Witt with questions as to her affairs.

"'Tis a thundering shame," he exclaimed when he heard of her losses. "And what will you do, Peggy? Zounds! but I think William has played you a scurvy

trick, and one ill becoming a brother. I would I had been your man of business. Whig or Tory, blood is thicker than water, and I'll not leave you in the lurch, on my word. I'll soon be of age, and then we'll see. Promise me you'll not forget your brother Chris, if you are in distress."

And all this so worked upon Kitty's sensibilities that she at last consented to go with him to join a party on the river who meant to view the regatta, but not to go to the grounds where the remainder of the programme would be carried out. And with this concession Christopher was obliged to be content, and himself joined the gay scene after he had escorted Kitty home.

That young lady, however, was sorry that she had gone at all, when, just after, Mrs. Rush read out from the *Royal Pennsylvania Gazette:*—

"'Intelligence being received that Mr. Washington and his tattered retinue had abandoned their mud-holes, and were on the march to Germantown, a detachment of British and Hessian troops went out to meet and escort them to the city; but the rebels being apprised of their approach, flew back with precipitation to what they call their camp, determined to act no further on the offensive than might be consistent with their safety.'"

The ha-ha's and ho-ho's that followed this extract made Kitty's ears tingle, and her hand sought her mother's, under the table. A gentle pressure answered and quieted her. But, a little more than a month later, Sir Henry Clinton's well-equipped and well-drilled army was flying across New Jersey with "Mr. Washington and his tattered retinue" in full pursuit, and Sir Henry Clinton with three thousand of his Tory friends escaped across the Delaware.

Kitty and her mother, with the greatest eagerness, watched for the first Continental troops to come into town. The girl's cheeks glowed like two roses, as she looked from the window. "They come! they come!" she cried. "At such a galloping rate. Look mother, 'tis Captain McLane and his light horse, is it not? and those are the Virginians. Will my father soon appear? And mother, Lady Gay, I may see her again. Look at the shopkeepers pulling down their king's arms; and what a glad noise is that huzzahing. I feel as if I must run out into the street, and join in it."

But a couple of hours before had Kitty taken leave of Colonel Savile, of her Aunt Rush, and Christopher, the latter lingering so long that it is a wonder he got away at all; and now here were the Americans marching in, amid the huzzas of the people, to make their

camp on the Common. The prim Quaker city was in a sad state of filth and ruin. The British had left their mark upon it, and it was now scarcely a desirable place of residence; but to the half-starved army it seemed a haven of rest after their winter at Valley Forge.

Breathlessly Kitty and Mrs. De Witt awaited the appearance of Captain De Witt. "At last I believe I see him," cried Kitty. "Surely that is my Lady Gay, although she is scarce as sleek as when she left us. And father, oh father! he is coming, mother, coming." And they ran to the door to welcome him.

"Father, oh father, you are so thin, and what a ragged father you are. We must mend you up. But is it not grand, the return of the troops, tattered and torn though they be?" And Kitty, laughing, yet on the verge of tears, hung on her father's arm, and could not take her eyes from his face.

The house into which they ushered him was bare of many comforts, for Mrs. Rush had taken all that she could with her; but it seemed a palace of delight to the man who had so long endured the rigors of camp life. There was so much to tell of silent endurance; of days when starvation and cold, desertion, illness, and disaffection seemed likely to put an end to all hopes. There was much, too, to tell on the

part of the wife and daughter who, to be true to themselves and to their friends, must endure taunts, must use pretence, and must hide their sighs behind their smiles.

"Are you not ashamed of your Tory wife?" whispered Mrs. De Witt.

"And your Tory daughter, who laughed with the redcoats, are you not ashamed of her?" asked Kitty, with shining eyes.

"My dears," returned Captain De Witt, putting an arm around each, "if such were the Tories the country over, his Excellency, General Washington, could soon disband his army. What courage my beloved ones have shown."

"Not I," protested Mrs. De Witt. "I was ever a coward. Yet I have bought no fineries in all these months, and have sent every penny I could to be used for our men. But Kitty, our Kitty, she is the heroine." And Kitty, proud of such distinction, could stay to hear no more praise, but ran off to look after Lady Gay.

In another week Captain De Witt was with the army which was closely pursuing the British across Jersey, and Kitty with her mother waited for the next news. The battle of Monmouth brought it: that battle where Lee's perfidy showed itself and brought down upon him the righteous wrath of Washington.

It was terrible weather, that of June 28, 1778, and beneath the panting heat many fell whom never a bullet touched. An express carried the news to Philadelphia, and silent old Aaron, — who, after all, was a sympathizer with the patriots, as the arrival of the American troops disclosed to Kitty and her mother, — Aaron came to the two, as they sat in the dusk, fanning themselves in Mrs. Rush's garden among the June roses, and began in his slow way.

"There's news, ma'am."

"Good or bad?" cried Kitty, springing up.

"Good and bad," returned he, slowly, turning his cap in his great hands.

"Tell us. You are so slow, Aaron," said Kitty, impatiently.

He looked around him in his meditative way. "We've whipped the British," he continued, "and their men are deserting right and left. They're coming into town in droves."

"Ah!" exclaimed Kitty, exultantly.

"But it's been a hard battle," Aaron went on. "Some's dropped dead, scores of 'em overcome by the heat, and some's been killed, and Lee he played the rascal."

"What!"

"It's so; I heard them talking it over at the tavern."

"But we have really won," said Kitty. And they forgot everything else in the joy of victory.

After this came a long season of patient waiting to the two living so quietly in Philadelphia. They found it possible to remain in Mrs. Rush's house, but they were forced to live very plainly, and Kitty found a use for those domestic accomplishments learned from the Gardners.

The massacre of Wyoming and of Cherry Valley sickened and unnerved them, for among the victims were those whom they knew.

The war was raging in the South, and thither was Captain De Witt called; Christopher, also. Of Lloyd they heard nothing. There were battles at sea as well as on land, and more victories; but the year 1779 was one of disaster to Kitty and her mother, for it brought a sorrow so deep that it seemed as if they could not bear it.

It was Aaron who, as usual, brought them their news. On this October day his face was so grave that Kitty knew instinctively that defeat was the word.

"We have had a fight at Savannah," he said, looking down at the floor. "There's been a terrible loss to our side, and some brave men have fallen. Some — some —" he paused.

"Go on," Mrs. De Witt spoke sharply, her face suddenly white.

"Yes, ma'am; he's wounded," Aaron blurted out.

"Who?" cried Mrs. De Witt.

"Him, the captain; mortal, they say. Oh, ma'am!"

Mrs. De Witt had staggered to her feet and was holding out two fluttering hands. "Not mortal — not mortal. His wound is not mortal!" she wailed out. "There's some mistake. Take me to him. All this time, and I have not heard. Take me quickly!" she cried, while Kitty, dazed and speechless, stood by.

Aaron looked down. "I'd take ye if I could, Mrs. De Witt, but th' aint no use. An' what's more, I don't know where to take ye. My brother-in-law's in his regiment; he knew I was here with ye and he sent me this." He slowly unfolded a paper. "'Captain De Witt was fatally wounded at Savannah. I saw him fall. Tell his wife and daughter. We are pretty well cut up, and I'm laid by for a while. I begged them to look to the captain, when they were carrying me off the field, but they said it was all up with him.'"

Mrs. De Witt took the paper to read the lines for herself. Her breath came in shuddering gasps as she sank on the floor. "Take me to him! Take me to

him!" she repeated. And Kitty, sobbing convulsively, threw herself on the floor at her mother's side.

"We must go, we must go!" Mrs. De Witt repeated.

Aaron stood looking at them helplessly.

"'Tain't no use thinkin' of it," he blurted out finally. "It's been days ago, and it's a long way off — and — and he's under ground by this time."

"Kitty! Kitty!" Mrs. De Witt shrilled out. And the two left the room together.

"That was the toughest job ever I tackled," said Aaron. "Gol dern them British!"

It was some time later when the two, who had been moving about the house like ghosts, helpless to comfort one another, were sitting in the darkened, silent drawing-room, when the front door opened and a figure came groping its way through the semi-darkness toward them.

"Peggy, Kitty," came in subdued tones.

Kitty turned her head; then she cowered close to her mother. "Aunt Joanna," she whispered, "Aunt Joanna."

Mrs. von Blum came nearer. Her sister-in-law stared at her with open, searching eyes.

"Oh, Peggy, don't look so," murmured Aunt Joanna. "I loved him. I did love him, poor Paul, my brother."

Mrs. De Witt gave a great cry, and the first tears

which her dry eyes had known in all these days rolled down her cheeks.

"I came to tell you," faltered Aunt Joanna, in tones unlike her usual commanding ones, "I came all the way to tell you that we thought of you and Kitty the first thing. I had followed my husband, and after the battle, when the wounded and prisoners were brought in, I, with others, ministered to them, and I discovered one of our old neighbors, Robert Ludlow. He saw my brother fall," there came a little sob in her throat. "We did all we could to find out where he lay. My husband did his best, for, Peggy, we meant to bring his body home and bury it beside our parents in the old graveyard. Robert told me the last words he heard him say were, 'Kitty, Margaret, my beloved country!' Poor Robert! he too died the next day."

And Kitty, who felt as if all her tears had long since been shed, sobbed afresh. This strange, subdued Aunt Joanna gave her a new sense of the reality of her loss. All doubt was over. Her father was gone from her beyond all hope.

After a time Aunt Joanna said: "And now, Peggy, I want you and Kitty to go back with me to the old home. You shall be tenderly protected. I have passes between the lines for us all. My home is yours. My brother's wife and child shall be my sacred charge."

There was intense emotion in Mrs. De Witt's tones as she said, "And live day after day face to face with Paul's murderers?"

"Oh, Peggy!" Aunt Joanna fell to weeping. Perhaps, indeed, her husband's own men had fired the volley which deprived her of her brother. And the thought was a terrible one.

"Then," she begged, "come home to your brother William. He bids me offer you his love, and wants me to say that he will welcome you and Kitty with open arms."

Mrs. De Witt sat very still, the nervous twitching of the hands clasped in her lap alone showing how she suffered. She turned to Kitty. "Shall we go?" she whispered.

Kitty's eyes searched her face. "I can bear whatever you can, mother," she replied.

"Thank you for your kind offer, Joanna," said Mrs. De Witt, "but Kitty and I would rather starve than accept charity at the hands of Paul's enemies. We will remember his last words, and his beloved country is ours."

Therefore Aunt Joanna went sadly away, her ruddy face gray and livid, and her step, instead of being brisk and spry, was like that of an old woman. At the door she held out two trembling hands.

"Kiss me, Kitty, kiss me," she entreated. "I shall, perhaps, never see you again."

And so Kitty put her arms around her aunt's neck, and was held closely for a moment. Then, with a deep sigh, Aunt Joanna let her go, and, without looking back, walked away.

Then Kitty went through the hall and out into the garden, where a little later Aaron came, and tried to entertain her with the tales he had heard at the coffee-house from the soldiers, of how they had fared so hardly at Valley Forge, and of how Baron Steuben had drilled them into shape.

"We scarce knew that bayonets were for any other use than for spitting our meat before a fire," one had said. "And the mixture of French and Dutch which our doughty Baron hurled at us blockheads was something to hear. Faith! I near split my sides laughing when he called his aide to berate us for him in English, after having used up his own stock of words."

And there were stories of this officer and that one, with tales of escapes and adventures. Taciturn Aaron was learning a garrulity which seemed hardly to be credited.

In time Kitty came to learn that her manœuvres with Lady Gay were not unnoticed by the old man,

who had shut his eyes to her frequent neglect in not bringing him back the key of the stable.

"I suspicioned somethin' was goin' on," he said; "but I thought if I didn't know nothin', I couldn't tell it."

And so the dreary days drifted along. Kitty and her mother received no one, went out seldom except to Christ Church to hear good Mr. White. Aaron watched over them faithfully, but Mrs. De Witt felt that she must be making new plans. She could not even dwell longer in a house belonging to a Tory, she said, although that Tory was her own sister.

"And shall you go at once, mother?" Kitty asked. There were deep shadows under her blue eyes, and Mrs. De Witt's slender hands were so thin and worn that her wedding ring would scarce stay on.

"We have scarce anything. Almost all my means are gone, and of your father's estate nothing is left but the homestead."

"Which we cannot make use of."

"No. I am weary, so weary, of thinking, thinking, thinking! I would I had been reared to be more useful in the world."

That very day was Kitty summoned downstairs to see two visitors who insisted that they would be received. They were Phebe and Cicely.

"Oh, Kitty, dear Kitty!" they cried; "we are so glad to see you, and so grieved, oh, so grieved for you." Cicely's arms were close around her. "And, Kitty," — each possessed herself of a hand, — "mother sent you a message. Do say you will grant us all a favor."

"How can I, till I know what it is?"

"Why, do you think, are we here?"

"I cannot tell."

"To buy Phebe's wedding clothes. But, oh dear me, 'twould take a basket to carry the money we need. Fancy a hundred dollars for a yard of silk, and calico scarce less! Our Phebe must needs have a modest outfit had not her own hands been busy at the loom."

"And so your favor is that I am to go to the wedding?"

"Yes, and more than that."

A shade passed over Kitty's face. "I am scarce in a mood for merrymaking," she sighed.

"Ah, my dear, my poor dear, it is not frolics that we would have of you. Listen," said Phebe. "You know I am to marry John, and we will go to our own home. Mother and Cicely will then be alone in our own old farmhouse, to which we are about to return. It is a roomy place; and, Kitty, if you and your

mother would but come and make your home there, how glad we all would be. Grandmother says she is too old to make another change, and will stay with Uncle James; so don't you see how lonely it would be for mother and Cicely in that big house all by themselves?"

Kitty smiled. It did seem a happy suggestion; and if she could but win her mother's consent, it would settle the problem which now faced them.

"We want you so much," pleaded Cicely.

And when the girls had gone, Kitty took the plan to her mother.

"Do you want to go, my little Kitty?" she asked.

"If you do, my mother. Should you not like it? They are so kind and good, and are such stanch patriots, and then they knew and loved my father."

The last words decided the matter. "We will go for a little while, anyhow," Mrs. De Witt decided. "The change will do you good. You are too young to be hopeless, my love, and work is what our hands need. We can help them to get settled, and to be of use is a great blessing to those in sorrow. Oh, Kitty, Kitty," and she put her head down on the girl's shoulder and cried as if her heart would break.

CHAPTER XVII.

PHEBE AND JOHN.

SUCH a forlorn, bare, battered-looking place was the house of the Gardners when they again took possession of it. Every fence was gone; the outbuildings were torn to pieces, the trees cut down. But the three girls, Kitty, Cicely, and Phebe, set cheerily to work to construct a home out of the ruins. The household goods, which had been carried to the little log cabin in the woods, were brought back and set in place, and the family utensils which had descended from generation to generation, were ranged in their old places. The big, heavy brass kettle was polished till it reflected every gleam from the fire; the three-legged skillets and broilers were scoured with diligence, the spinning-wheels brought out, and the floor tastefully sanded in such careful and fine designs as the girls could originate. Then, when they looked around they thought the kitchen bore its old familiar look of cosey comfort.

Old Aaron had asked to be permitted to go to the

farm with Mrs. De Witt and Kitty. "I'm a Jerseyman and country bred," he said. "I'm no use around here, now there are no horses to look after, and once I've showed my colors, Mrs. Rush will have none of me if she comes back. I guess Hiram Gardner won't be averse to letting me help on his place." Which was true enough, for the Gardners were only too glad to accept his services. So the old man pottered about, clearing up here, tinkering there, till outside as well as in began to look more ship-shape.

By Christmas they were quite comfortably established, the weather was growing colder, and on Christmas eve the three girls sat on the floor before the fire, which Aaron had managed to pile high with logs, despite the fact that wood was rather scarce. Mrs. Gardner was busy at the wheel, while Mrs. De Witt was carding the wool to be used later on. Phebe sat by the clock reel, while Kitty and Cicely filled quills for the loom, which had been reëstablished in its special room. Wool had not been easy to procure of late, but Aaron had managed to get hold of some fleeces, and the family were all busy at work, despite the fact that Phebe's wedding-day was but a week off. Clothing for the army was a necessity, and an opportunity to furnish it must not be lost.

The girls chattered happily of the coming festivities,

but a grave look was on the face of each matron. Mrs. Gardner spoke her thought. "He will be in the South where the winter is milder, and Valley Forge will not be repeated, I hope."

Mrs. De Witt gave a long sigh, and then a shudder. "If I but knew where he lies," she said. "Ah me, what an empty world it is!"

"But he is safe — safe," replied Mrs. Gardner, almost wistfully.

The buzz and click of Phebe's wheel stopped.

"There's John!" she exclaimed; "I heard his step."

There was a murmur of voices outside; Aaron's gruff tones in ejaculatory inquiry. Presently he opened the door, put in his head, and went out again.

"Now, what did he do that for?" said Phebe.

"To see if we had plenty of wood, maybe," returned Cicely. "He is so afraid we will not be luxurious enough. That's what comes of his having served grand folks like Mrs. Rush; we're the gainers thereby."

The door opened again, and John Tucker came in. He threw off his greatcoat, displaying his one empty sleeve pinned up. Phebe went up to him and touched the sleeve gently, smiling up into his face. "What was the parley about?" she asked. "You and Aaron seemed to be doing a deal of talking."

"So we were." John smiled. "We were consulting about wedding guests."

"Wedding guests?" Phebe's blush came readily. "And — Aaron?"

"Sit you down, John," Mrs. Gardner nodded to him, without stopping her wheel.

But he walked toward the fireplace and looked down at Kitty; then he glanced at her mother. "I came across a relative of yours, Kitty," he said, "and I want to ask him to the wedding."

"A relative of mine?" Kitty laid down her quill.

"Yes."

"And who?"

"Guess."

"Let me see. My cousin, Cynthia Satterlee."

"No."

"Oh, I remember. You said 'him.' Not Christopher! He has not returned?"

"No."

"One of my cousins Vanderpoel?"

"No; some one nearer of kin."

"I cannot think who. Help me, mother. Give me a hint, John. Is he young or old?"

"Older than your mother or I, but not so old as — Methuselah."

Kitty pondered seriously. "I cannot think. Is he of New York?"

"Yes."

"I have no uncles, and he is nearer than a cousin. This is a riddle."

John observed her gravely and intently.

"He is a patriot of patriots," he remarked.

"A patriot, a near relative, and of New York. Where can I find such an one? I think you must be mistaken, John."

"But I am not."

"Does my mother know him?"

"Indeed, yes. He – he has been a soldier; under General Washington."

Mrs. De Witt, with a little cry, dropped her rolls of wool. She stood up with a yearning, searching look in her eyes.

"John! John!" she cried, "don't, don't."

He turned toward her. "Dear lady," he said, "no hope is too great in these days of strange tidings."

"No! no!" There was pleading in her voice.

John went to her and took her two trembling little hands in his one strong one. "Dear lady," he said, "I am no bringer of bad news. Consider what would be your greatest joy, and tell me."

"Paul, my husband, my husband — to see him," she

murmured, without taking her eyes off his face. "But he is dead. His comrades saw him die. Robert Ludlow, who knew him well; and that other, they both saw him fall; they saw him die."

"Or thought they did," replied John, gently.

Kitty was on her feet. Did she understand? Was a miracle to take place?

"Where is he? Where is he?" murmured Mrs. De Witt, turning her head from side to side like one half delirious.

John made a stride toward the door, and opened it.

Then out of the dim starlit night a figure approached, haltingly, on crutches, Aaron carefully guiding his way. And, as the full firelight fell on his face, it showed the pale features of — Paul De Witt.

And then the tears of joy, the glad exclamations, the questions tripping over each other, that followed. Mrs. Gardner trotted about, wiping her eyes every now and then, and saying "Dear! dear! who could believe it? Cousin Paul. Dear! dear!"

Cicely and Phebe sat smiling at John, and Aaron stood rubbing his hands and looking from one to the other.

"There is little more than half of me left," said Captain De Witt, after the first excitement was over,

"for one leg was shot away, and" — he held up a maimed hand.

Kitty caught it and kissed it tenderly. "Oh, but father, it is you — you. What joy! what joy! Tell us now how we heard such terrible news of you, that you were left lying dead on the field of battle."

"'Tis quite true that I was left for dead on the battle-field. I will not tell you of those hours of agony, but the next morning our men, who came to bury their dead, found that I was still breathing, and I was taken to the hospital, where I lay for weeks more dead than alive. A sabre cut on my head kept me from knowing anything that went on about me, and with this leg gone, I was in rather a questionable condition; but after long, long weeks I groped my way back to life. Having heard that I was reported dead, and that my case was considered hopeless, my comrades did not contradict the reports, and so, not till I was able to leave the hospital did I hear that you were in ignorance of my chances for recovery. Then I set forth to seek you out, and have been some time about it. I traced you to this neighborhood, saw John in Bordentown, and he piloted me here. But I am a helpless wreck, and can do no more for my country. And to you, my dear ones, what a hopeless, useless hulk I have brought."

"No! no!" cried Mrs. De Witt. "No, Paul, no. How can you say so? Have you not given all but your life for your country, and do you not deserve honor and love, and more? We shall manage, we shall manage." She straightened herself up. "Now I can defy the universe," she cried, her face alight. "Kitty, Kitty, can we not put our shoulders to the wheel? I have a little, but we will make it do. With you a crust of bread will be like manna from on high. Oh, Paul! such a Christmas! Such a gift from heaven!" She fell on her knees beside his chair and sobbed outright.

"There! there! my dear, my wife, Margaret," began Captain De Witt, solicitously. "Dear heart, you are all overwrought. This has been too great a surprise for you."

Kitty's tears, too, were falling over the maimed hand which she held closely against her breast.

"Come, come," Mrs. Gardner's brisk voice broke in. "Aaron, do you see that the fire burns brightly. Cicely, get me that little bottle of salts in the other room. Here, Margaret, smell this. You are all of a tremble. My! my! what it is to have a strong set of nerves like mine." The good woman's own face was twitching, and her hand shook as she held it out to her friend's support.

"And John told us in such a nice way," Kitty informed her father. "He said he had invited a relative of ours to the wedding."

"The wedding! Ah, I had not heard of that. Which of you three lasses is the lucky one? Ah, I see, Cousin Phebe, there's no need of an answer. And when is it to be?"

"Next week," spoke up John, proudly.

"I can't dance at your wedding, John, but I'll warrant you'll have no truer well-wisher present. Cousins are we all to be then. And that good man Hiram Gardner, where is he?"

"With his regiment in the South," John told him.

"Pray God he comes home in safety."

And now the tears trembled on Mrs. Gardner's lashes, but she turned away quickly and spoke of other things. "You're to understand first thing, Paul, that this is your home as long as you need one," she said.

"Ah, cousin, how good you are to say it."

"No, I'm not. Kitty and Peggy understand well enough that when Phebe goes, I'll be lonely enough with Hiram away and only Cicely here with me. It was all settled that they were to make a visit of indefinite length. We owe something more than you can realize to that child, Kitty. So don't you go upsetting our plans, or—"

"You'll be sorry I've come back," Captain De Witt laughingly finished the sentence. "Very well, I'll acquiesce till I get my wits back, and glad enough am I of such a peaceful haven. I shall be chiefly ornamental, for I can be of little use."

"You shall be ornamental," declared Kitty, a week later, when they were preparing for the wedding. "Shall we not make a gay spark of him, mother?" she said gleefully. "Where are the fine feathers to make our fine bird? Have you not brought any in your boxes?"

"I have truly, though little did I expect to see them worn again. He shall be decked out as becomes a fine cavalier."

"And my wooden leg. Shall you hang satin breeches on that peg?" asked the captain, rather ruefully.

"Yes, for are we not proud of it? Nothing is too good for such a token of your bravery."

And so they dressed him up in plum-colored coat, black satin breeches, a ruffled shirt, and silk stockings, while his silver knee and shoe buckles shone as brightly as Kitty's hands could make them.

"Now let me tie your wig, father dear," she said, "and you'll look, — mother dear, does he not once more look as becomes our gentleman soldier? Now,

go you down, father, and see the company in the place of host, while mother and I put on our furbelows, and then I must help to dress the bride. Ah, how happy I am who expected this to be such a doleful time." She gave her father a rapturous kiss, and helped him to the stairs, down which his wooden leg clumped noisily. "I love to hear it," said Kitty, over the baluster, "for it assures me that my father is near me." And she ran back to her room to be decked out by her mother.

"And you, too, must wear your finest, mother dear. Your pretty green brocade and your jewels!"

"Ah, my jewels, I have none."

"None!" exclaimed Kitty, aghast.

"No; all are sold save my wedding ring."

"Never mind, you are sweetly lovely with not a single one. Where are my stays? and oh, mother, must I have my hair so high?"

"Yes, and a touch of powder, so. The blue will be vastly becoming."

"And how glad I am you gave the white satin gown to Phebe. She will make a fine appearance, will she not? Ah, see how impatient I am, I have broken a stay lace."

She was dressed at last, and stood looking at herself in the little mirror. There came a recollection

of when she had last worn the dress. She turned and said a little wistfully, "Where is Lloyd, I wonder, brave Lloyd," and her eyes took on a retrospective look.

"Forget him, my love, forget him! A soldier's life is too uncertain. I should tremble to have a loss come to you such as I believed mine to be. You are so young, my little girl, not yet seventeen. Think of those nearer home, and forget Lloyd."

"But we can none of us forget him for what he did," said Kitty, softly. And she passed out of the room.

Yet because of this memory the pretty compliments of the young swains who were present at the wedding fell on careless ears, so far as Kitty was concerned. She watched John's earnest face as he stood up, straight and tall, by the side of Phebe, who, slim and graceful in her white satin gown, looked a fair and happy bride. Cousin Cynthia Satterlee so far forgot her Toryism as to be present with her husband, who discussed politics in an amiable manner with Captain De Witt. Mrs. Satterlee brought letters to Kitty and her father which Aunt Joanna had managed to get through the lines. "I have but just heard of your father's return," she wrote to Kitty. "I have been a heartless woman to him, to Paul, my poor, misused

brother; and he must let me do for you all. He will bear arms no more, and he is my brother who was dead and is alive again."

Captain De Witt frowned at her manner of putting it. "I bear arms no more because I cannot, and not because I will not," he said. "Ah, my sister, my heart is still my country's. I thank you for your good intent, but my wife and I can accept nothing from those who are our enemies."

"At least," wrote Aunt Joanna, "I can relieve my brother of your support, Kitty. You need be no expense to him. Herman, my husband, took a great liking to you for your bravery in coming to camp."

Captain De Witt glanced up at his daughter as she stood looking over his shoulder, for they had gone to a quiet corner of the hall to read their letters, and she was reading hers with him.

"What think you of that?" he said.

Kitty clasped his neck. "Father, father, you will not send me away. I will work. I will do anything; only keep me near you. I cannot leave you."

He leaned his cheek against her encircling arm. "Never fear, daughter. You shall not go if you do not wish. Poor Joanna! We are brother and sister, and I owe her a kind thought for her good intent

toward us, but we will hang together, Kitty, my child, while there's anything left of us."

"What has kept you?" asked Cicely, as they reappeared in the big room, where most of the company was assembled.

"My Aunt Joanna."

Cicely opened her eyes, but just then the fiddler began to tune up, and off she marched, while Kitty gave her hand to the brideman, John's brother Ben, who bowed before her.

And then, while the music played on fast and furious and the merrymaking never slackened, Phebe and her husband drove off to their own home, two miles away. When all was quiet and the great fire began to smoulder down, Cicely came up, saying with a little catch in her voice, —

"Oh, Kitty, what should I do, what should I do without you? I am so lonely, so lonely!"

"My Euphemia," whispered Kitty.

And Cicely dried her tearful eyes, laughing, "My Leonora!" And then they fell to discussing the compliments paid them, and sat before the fire so long that Mrs. Gardner warned them they could not expect to attend each other's wedding, if they lost their beauty sleep at this rate.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HIDE AND SEEK.

"EVEN a one-legged man gets restless," Captain De Witt said, a month later. "And this idle life doesn't do for me. I must see some of my friends in Philadelphia, who have made a study of the state of finance. Perhaps by their advice I may get order out of the chaos of our affairs; at least sufficiently for me to know whether I have a leg left to stand on," he added jocularly.

"Now, father," said Kitty; "I wish you wouldn't make fun of yourself. And shall we all go back to Philadelphia?"

"There is no use thinking of New York while the enemy holds it, and I must use our means to the best advantage. Hiram Gardner will be coming home soon, for he is ill, and his term of enlistment is about up, so we need not leave our cousins alone."

"Father," said Kitty, suddenly. "What do you suppose became of Lady Gay — dear Lady Gay?"

"I wish I knew, my child. Unless she has been

killed in battle, she is doubtless in the hands of the British. I have tried to get some account of her, but all to no purpose. It was a brave little daughter who gave her up."

"I had nothing else to give, but I'd like to know, if she is alive, that she is well treated. Shall we go back to Mrs. Rush's house?"

"I think not. We must find more modest quarters, and I shall try to obtain such work as I am fitted for."

Cicely was inconsolable at the idea of parting from Kitty. "You will not go till after Phebe's sewing-bee," she begged of Kitty. "You know we are all to go and sew for the soldiers. Phebe is making big preparations, and you must surely stay for that affair. All the boys and girls will be there, and we shall have a great time. It would be nothing without you. Your mother must go and your father, too. Kitty, don't you wish Ferdinand were here?"

Kitty looked up shyly. "I — I don't know."

"Oh, Kitty," said Cicely, roguishly, "tell the truth."

"But I do not. It has been so long since I saw him, and I was but a little girl."

The dignity of seventeen looked back upon fifteen as a very callow age.

"But if he should come," persisted Cicely.

"If he should, what then? I'd treat him politely."

"And Master Christopher?"

"Politely, too. I wonder where he is, poor Chris. Ah, Cicely, how much can happen in a short time. And Elspeth, dear little Elspeth, not a word from her have I had in all these years, and she has lost her beloved brother Robert. I feel so sorry for her."

"But you have me," returned Cicely, reproachfully. "Your Euphemia."

"And what should I do without her! Yes, I have a great many blessings. But who comes up the road at so smart a pace? Two horsemen. Do you recognize them?"

"No, I do not," replied Cicely, carelessly.

Kitty pressed closer to the window, and presently she drew back with a little exclamation, "Oh, Cicely, look again," she cried.

Cicely obeyed. And then, with never a word, ran downstairs. And Kitty more slowly followed. Indeed, as she put her foot upon the step, she turned and went back to look at herself in the small glass over her bureau. She gave her hair a pat, smoothed down her silk apron, and then with quiet step went down the stairway.

Mrs. Gardner and Cicely were crying and exclaiming over a tall, thin soldier who patted them on the

"SHE . . . WENT BACK TO LOOK AT HERSELF . . . THE SMALL GLASS OVER HER BUREAU."

back and kept saying, "There, mother; there, Cissy. I'm all right; no bones broken. Don't take on so."

Leaning up against the chimney-piece was a younger man, a smile upon his face. He turned quickly as Kitty opened the door. "Ah, Kitty," he cried, "perhaps you have a word of welcome for me. I'm of no account to my cousins since Cousin Hiram is here." He moved toward her, took both her hands, and looked down at her critically. "You have not changed," he said, "except that you look more serious. Kitty, Kitty, have you forgotten me? Are you glad to see me?"

"Yes, Mr. Holliday, I am very glad," replied Kitty, sedately. He seemed so much more of a man, so tall and broad-shouldered. She felt that he had almost outgrown her thought of him as a lad.

"*Mr.* Holliday?" he repeated. "You used to say Lloyd."

Kitty looked down. "Lloyd, then."

By this time Cicely had come to a realizing sense of the young man's presence, and ran to him. "We were speaking of you but this morning. Just before you arrived. Is it not strange when things happen so? Kitty and I were speaking of you."

He looked triumphantly at Kitty, who turned away to greet Mr. Gardner.

"Are you better?" she asked. "We heard you were quite ill."

"And so I have been, and am not well now, so I've come home to get nursed up before I go off again."

"And you?" Kitty turned to Lloyd.

Mr. Gardner answered for him. "We'll have him tell us a pretty tale, after a bit. Just now we are both pretty well fagged out, so let us rest a while before you put us through our catechizing."

That evening, around the roaring fire, they listened to the three soldiers who took turns in telling of their experiences. Rosy-cheeked apples suspended before the fire slowly sizzled as they baked. Kitty and Cicely cuddled together on the settle. Mr. Gardner, in grandmother's big chair, held the place of honor. There were accounts of the horrors perpetrated in the South by Hessians, Tories, and British; there were recountals of battles fought and privations endured; but to Lloyd's story did Kitty listen the most attentively.

"My name ought to be Moses," he began, "because I've been drawn out of the water. And I'll tell you all how it came about." He paused a moment and cast a swift glance at Kitty. "You all know that Lady Gay and I reached our destination safely, and

I immediately went to reënlist. Later on, I, with another (Sam Stone, by the way), undertook a little enterprise, and the first thing I knew I was nabbed. Sam escaped, luckily, but I was marched off, I knew not where. I couldn't stand the idea of being a prisoner, and thought drowning would be enough sight better. So I found a chance one night, when we were about to cross the river, to slip overboard. You know down our way we're pretty near as much at home on the water as on land. My father used to take each one of us, as soon as he considered him big enough, out to the middle of the river, and pitch him overboard. He said we'd learn to swim better that way. So you see water and I were no strangers. I managed, by diving and coming up, to get further and further away from my captors, and finally I found my strength giving out; but I could float, and was out of the way of British guns. After a time I got hold of a piece of board that was drifting down stream. That helped me, and I managed to keep up till daylight. How far I had drifted I had no idea, but I can tell you that when I caught sight of a brig ahead of me, I was about near enough done for not to care much whether she flew our stars and stripes or the British colors. I was spied by a young fellow, God bless him! and he hauled me on board. I found

I was on an American ship out-bound for ammunition and supplies, so I was all right. We had a little set-to later on with an English vessel, but we whacked 'em and took our prize, which we've just brought into port at Philadelphia, and here I am."

"And the young man who saved you, what was his name?" asked Kitty, her eyes big and intense with excitement.

"His name is Thomas Mendenhall."

"Why, I know him. How strange that it should be he. A brave lad he is. And he is back again?"

"Yes, he returned with the ship. I sought you at your old stopping place, but found you not; then I bethought me of searching out my cousins, and went first to the little log cabin. In the village nearest, I learned they had left to come here. I did not expect to see service afloat, but I am not sorry for the experience. I must find out where my old regiment is, for I want to go back."

"You'll have a journey before you, then," said Mr. Gardner, "for all the fighting is now in the South."

"Then South I go, and I can stop on my way to see them all at home."

"But you'll stay here a day or two at least," said Cicely.

Lloyd's eyes sought Kitty's, but she was looking steadfastly into the fire.

"I'll stay a day or two," he replied.

The day or two lengthened into a week, at the end of which Phebe's sewing party took place.

A merrymaking it was, for all the girl's fingers flew as they fashioned linen and worsted homespun into shirts and coats for the men in the army. But the tongues flew, too, although the gossip of the neighborhood occupied them less than the stories of the war. In the evening, when the husbands and brothers came in, they played such old-fashioned games as Fox and Geese, Hunt the Slipper, Hull-Gull How many! and such. Phebe had provided such refreshments as she could in those days of rather scant rations — apples, cider, and nuts, cakes and doughnuts. Kitty had not had so good a time in a long while.

"Do you not like this better than merrymaking with the redcoats?" Lloyd whispered to her.

She flashed back a smile in answer. She had not forgotten that night of the rout. "I need not fear to-night that you will be detected, need I?" she said. "Oh, how venturesome you were; I trembled for you."

He smiled at the recollection. "That was not

near so hazardous as my leaving the city with Lady Gay. By the way, what has become of our friend Christopher? Do you know I met him face to face as I was leaving the barn that night, but he must have been in deep thought, for not once did he raise his eyes, but let me pass as if I were a shadow."

Kitty looked thoughtful. "Ah, poor Christopher! He is a good lad. He did suspect; but because you had saved my father, and because you were my friend, he would not learn whether you were friend or foe when he met you."

"Do you mean that he deliberately did so?" Lloyd leaned forward, looking at her earnestly.

"Yes," replied Kitty, "he did so deliberately."

Lloyd stood up. They were sitting in a corner of Phebe's living room. Lloyd had been cracking nuts for Kitty. There were other little groups scattered about the room, and in the hall.

"May Fortune give me a chance to do him a like good turn," said Lloyd, fervently. "I shall not forget him, — and after I had laid him out on the floor! He must be a rare good fellow, if he is — "

"What? A redcoat?"

"No; I was not going to say that."

"What, then?"

"My rival."

Kitty looked at the toe of her slipper. "Does not Phebe make good cakes?" she said irrelevantly.

"If I ever meet him," continued Lloyd, reverting to the subject, "I shall apologize for my belligerent attack. I shall thank him for his generosity. Ah, Kitty, do you know what this night means? The end of a happy, happy week. If I come back — no —" he shook his head as if to get rid of some intrusive word. "I shall not forget Master Van Ness," he said. "When this war is over, he and I may meet on an equal footing, and then — Ah, well, Kitty, you have told me that which changes intentions for me. Yet I may, at least, ask you not to forget me. You will not forget your friend Lloyd?"

"No." Kitty's voice was very low.

"And if chance throws Master Christopher in my way, may I not give him a message from you?"

Kitty looked up, and drew in her breath quickly. "You may say that I am well and happy."

"No more?"

"Is not that enough?"

"'Twould not be for me."

Kitty bit her lip. "Tell him I do not forget his many thoughtful kindnesses to me."

"And that you will be glad to see him again?"

Kitty's head dropped again. Lloyd was gazing at

her intently. "If you wish," she replied, half audibly. They were silent for a space. Kitty felt suddenly less happy. Something had gone out of the brightness of her evening. She could not understand why Lloyd, who had been so gay and joyous, should, all at once, seem thoughtful and quiet, even grave. Had she offended him, or was he only thinking of the struggle into which he was so soon again to enter?

"Let us go find Cicely," she said, breaking the silence which had fallen between them. "I am tired of sitting here."

He gravely acquiesced, and they hunted up Cicely, who, with half a dozen others, was roasting apples before the kitchen fire. She made room for Kitty, and set an apple to roast for her, while the merry, bantering talk between the lads and lasses in the little group did not stop.

Lloyd had not joined them. Kitty saw him across the room, talking earnestly to her father and John Tucker.

"Are you tired, Kitty?" whispered Cicely. "You are so quiet."

"Am I quiet?" said Kitty, rousing herself. "Come, then, let us have some stirring frolic. Blind Man's Buff, or some such thing. Sitting before the fire dulls one's wits. I am tired of being still." And in a few

moments she was a leading spirit in a game of Hide and Seek, in which Cicely asked Lloyd to join, but he quietly shook his head in refusal.

"Kitty," her mother called, as she went flying by. "Come, say good-by to Mr. Holliday. He is going to leave us." Kitty stood stock-still. Then she gave her head a little toss. "Don't forget my message, if you happen to be taken prisoner by Christopher," she said saucily. "I hope you'll have a good visit at home, but you mustn't let them keep you too long from your regiment. The Maryland lasses are said to be wondrous fair." She did not look at him as she held out her hand; then, with a careless farewell, she darted up the stairway. At the top Cicely was waiting for her, having already made her adieux.

"Come, let us go hide together," she proposed. "I know a fine place."

"No." Kitty freed herself from the detaining hand. "I'll hide alone, and I'll warrant you can't find me."

She ran to the attic stored full of odds and ends which had belonged to John's parents and grandparents, for this was the family homestead. She made her way across the floor, stumbling over old deerskin trunks, and against chests and boxes. When she reached the little dusty window, she knelt before it, straining her eyes to see out into the darkness with-

out. A lump was in her throat; her hands were cold and nervous. She only half heard the footsteps running up and down the stairways below; the voices calling her. She knelt there until she saw, in the light of a lantern he carried, the tall, straight figure of Lloyd Holliday, leading a horse.

She heard them down there, calling to him, "Good-by! Good luck! Be sure to whip the British!" And then she watched the figure go cantering down the road. She pressed her fingers over her hot eyes, and sat still on the floor, how long she did not know. She was conscious at last of some one's coming to the head of the steps leading to the garret, calling, "Kitty! Kitty! Where can the child be! Can she have come up here, and have fallen asleep?" It was Phebe, who stood holding a candle and peering into the dim corners.

Kitty sprang up. "I'm here," she said, recovering her wits. "I thought nobody would be able to find me."

"You don't mean to say you've been here all this time?" said Phebe, wonderingly. "You must like cold places, and dark ones."

"Is it cold?" returned Kitty, vaguely.

"You goose! of course it is. Your father and mother are going, and half the others have gone.

What made you stay so long? I verily believe you did fall asleep."

Kitty did not contradict her, but followed her to the clean room on the floor below,—the best bedchamber, which smelt of burning wood, and showed its plump, four-poster bed, with a wonderful patchwork quilt over it, its "highboy" with brass handles, and its stiff, straight-backed chairs.

Kitty's mother was standing in the middle of the room. She turned a sweet, serious look upon the girl.

"Here is the runaway," said Phebe. "Would you believe, she was up in that dark, cold attic all this time? You'd better give her a good spanking, Cousin Peggy. I must run down to see that those bricks are hot for the Satterthwaite party."

Kitty's mother took her cold little hands in hers, and looked at her steadily.

The girl's chin quivered, and two slow tears stole down her cheeks. Her mother put her arms close around her.

"Dear little heart! dear little heart!" she whispered; "mother understands."

CHAPTER XIX.

AN OLD FRIEND.

BEFORE the week was out, Kitty and her parents found themselves again in Philadelphia. This time it was under the roof of kind Mrs. Wright that they found shelter, for the house of Mrs. Rush had passed into other hands.

It was a long time since they had heard anything from New York, for correspondence between the two cities was forbidden; and what the Van Nesses, and other of their friends, were doing they did not know. Sufficient for themselves, however, was the fact that they three were together, and that although Captain De Witt's days of military usefulness were over, his was a record of which to be proud.

There were many things of interest going on in the Quaker city. Captain De Witt became absorbed in the workings of the new bank, and found, outside of that, employment sufficiently profitable to maintain them. Mrs. De Witt threw herself heart and soul into the movement, so nobly headed by the Phila-

delphia women, to raise money for the bounty to be paid the soldiers: this in answer to an appeal from General Washington to the country at large to make the utmost endeavor in such direction. Over three hundred thousand dollars were raised.

Matters looked dark enough in the South. Continued disaster seemed to attend the Americans, and sad indeed was the outlook during that year of 1780. Not only had Savannah and Charleston fallen into the hands of the enemy, but there was an attempt to renew hostilities nearer the centre, and New Jersey was again threatened, but escaped with less loss than was feared. Added to these misfortunes came Arnold's treachery, — an act which not only stirred the contempt of his contemporaries, but has won from succeeding generations the obloquy due to a detestable deed.

In many busy ways the days passed. Kitty, being now a full-fledged young lady, joined in all the good works as well as the festivities which were on hand. She worked hard to do her share of the making of clothing for the needy troops. She was first and foremost in giving aid to the soldiers suffering with camp fever, who were brought into the city to be nursed.

"Our Kitty, who promised to be only a petted,

spoiled darling is blossoming into a noble woman," Captain De Witt said to his wife. "She seems in no mood to marry, for which I hardly know whether to be glad or sorry. I should like to see her in her own happy home, but she is such a comfort that I cannot bear the thought of losing her." Good Abigail Wright found her "very tender, and so inclined to Friendly ways as to be like one of us," she declared, adding, "She hath a sweet nature."

"Do you think she is fond of Christopher?" Kitty's father asked his wife. "I remember having heard some talk of a fancy on one side or the other."

Mrs. De Witt raised her eyes. There was an inscrutable look in them. "When the war is over we shall find out," she replied.

But it was before then that they found out, for one day there came a letter through the lines, a long, long letter from Mrs. Rush full of family news. Through the interposition of a friend it had been allowed to pass, after being examined.

"What will you give for my budget?" cried Mrs. De Witt gayly. "Ah, Miss Kitty, you'd give much to hear what I have to tell. I'll give you three guesses as to whom it concerns."

An eager light came into Kitty's eyes, but her

mother shook her head gently. She always understood.

"Elspeth!" cried Kitty. "You have heard something of her?"

"Yes, that is part of it."

"She is perhaps married, or about to be. I can hardly believe it, yet she is a little older than I. Fourteen and four make, no, five, make nineteen. 'Tis five years since we left New York."

"You are a good guesser. All you say is true. It is all so funny, however, that I think we must keep the best for another time. I'll tell the rest of my budget to you. Sister Lavinia is well. She finds New York very gay, and she does not regret Philadelphia. Your Aunt Joanna is there. She does not rage so much against us as formerly. Your old home is occupied as quarters for some of General Knyphausen's troops."

Kitty pondered over it all. Then she asked, "And Christopher, what news of him?"

Mrs. De Witt laughed. "Chris has been released on parole. He had a slight wound from which he has recovered."

"Then he was a prisoner."

"Yes."

"And where is he now?"

"He went up the country to recuperate. Now, Kitty, don't ply me with too many questions, or I shall tell all I know."

"But you've said nothing of Elspeth, and it was of her the mystery seemed to be."

Mrs. De Witt shut her lips. "No use conjecturing. I'll not tell. There, go along, Kitty, and ask your father for the news. He has just come in, and there may have an express arrived."

Captain De Witt entered with a disgusted look on his face. "Such patriotism," he cried. "Hirelings! hirelings! who will not fight for their country without pay; and yet we abuse the Hessians."

"What is it, Paul?" asked his wife.

"It was not enough that our men must break camp at Morristown two weeks ago, and must mutiny because of arrears in pay, thirteen hundred of them, and most of them disbanded when we need men in the South so badly. Well, now have the New Jersey troops followed suit; and they cause his Excellency all this added trouble when our affairs are bad enough without it. Would that I were a whole man."

"Now, father," protested Kitty, "you have done your share. The poor men have, doubtless, families depending upon them; no wonder they get desperate,

for they have not had much glory, and to have no money, either. They're not so much to blame."

"Not all can be as brave as my wife and daughter, I grant you," he replied. "But 'tis most discouraging. Such a year! Such a year! And that black traitor Benedict Arnold must add to our misfortunes. I cannot forget his infamy. The last news of him but adds to the foulness of the wretch's record. A British brigadier, and leading men into Virginia to despoil his own countrymen. 'Tis terrible."

"Nor can any of us forget Mr. André, such a courteous gentleman, and I knew him well. 'Tis a pitiful remembrance," Kitty acknowledged.

"What with treason and desertion, we learn how black the hearts of men can be," her father replied.

Mrs. De Witt looked up quickly. "I wouldn't say anything about deserters," she said.

"Why not? I despise them."

"Well, it depends. If a man be convinced that he is on the wrong side, and goes over to the other, how then?"

"I should not like him to be active in his partisanship," said Kitty.

"Perhaps not, but still, if he be conscientious. If it is a disgrace to change opinions, I am a sorry culprit."

"Oh, mother dear, I forgot, I forgot indeed, that you had ever espoused the Tory cause. You are now so good a patriot, I can think of you as nothing else."

"'Twas conviction, Kitty, conviction, I do assure you."

"Certainly not mercenary motives," said her husband. "Poor Peggy, you made a bad bargain, I'm thinking."

"Hush, hush," she laid her hand over his lips. "I would not change my lot for any woman's. Dear, simple-hearted Abigail Wright has shown me that one needs not fine feathers to be content. I care no more for gewgaws. The love of my husband and daughter is all I care for; — and the good of my fellow creatures," she added. "War is a great developer. I can scarcely recognize myself. But there, Kitty, run and change your dress. You may have callers this afternoon."

"Who?"

"There lies the secret I still hold, but which I can't keep much longer, if you stay in the room."

Kitty ran off. "Elspeth, maybe, or Christopher. Dear, oh dear, can I wait?" she said to herself. "I'd rather 'twere Elspeth. I wonder how she looks; if she has grown tall; she was such a little mite."

She had scarcely arranged her hair, fastened her

kerchief, and given a little jerk to her blue homespun frock, when she was summoned below. A graceful little figure darted out into the hall to meet her, clasping her in her arms and saying: "And this is Kitty! my dear, dear Kitty! I know her yellow locks and her big blue eyes. Ah, Kitty, Kitty!"

"Elspeth, my Elspeth, 'tis really you, 'tis really Elspeth Ludlow."

Elspeth laughed and cast a swift look over her shoulder. "No," she said, "I'm obliged to confess, it isn't."

"Isn't?" Kitty held her off at arm's length. "You *are* my Elspeth. I am not mistaken."

"I am your Elspeth, truly, but not Elspeth Ludlow. Mrs. Van Ness, if you please. Come here, Christopher." And to Kitty's amazement, out stepped Christopher, smiling at her surprise.

"Oh, Kitty," laughed Elspeth, "I'm your aunt, your mother's sister. Address me properly, if you please."

"Am I dreaming?" exclaimed Kitty. "I was never so amazed. If it please you, my aunt and uncle, will you be so good as to explain this. I believe, yet, you are but playing a trick upon me."

"Indeed, then, we are not," Elspeth replied, with all the dignity of a newly married woman. "I am truly Mrs. Christopher Van Ness, since a week ago,

and Christopher wrote to your mother all about it, but we wanted to surprise you, so she was not to tell. Come, we'll talk it all over. Go along, Chris, and see your sister. I want Kitty all to myself. You can make your speech to her later."

In Abigail Wright's prim little parlor they established themselves, while Elspeth told her story with the familiar little gestures Kitty remembered so well, and with all the old love of the sensational.

"'Tis such a romance," she began. "Oh, Kitty, you will like to hear it. I wish you could tell me as pretty a one about yourself. You must know we were up near Albany. Oh, what dreadful times there have been! but we'll not discuss them now. I wrote to you many times; why did you never answer?"

"I never heard once from you. I suppose my many movings about prevented your letters from reaching me. Go on, Elspeth; never mind now about the letters."

"Well, you know I always turned up my nose at Kit. I did, indeed. He always seemed so silly a boy. I suppose being the youngest he was coddled to death; but when he came up to our neighborhood, wounded, pale, and interesting, and could tell me tales of his soldiering, of you and your heroism, I liked

him, and I enjoyed hearing him talk; it seemed a bit out of the old life to be talking to a neighbor. So he came to our house often, and one day as we stood in the great hall at my grandfather's — you know I have been at my grandfather's all this time."

"Yes, I heard so."

"Well, on this day, a big portrait, hanging directly over me, slipped, and would have fallen on me, but that Christopher caught it on his wounded shoulder. Was it not romantic? But, ah me, I was so remorseful when he fainted at my feet; and, oh dear, we had an invalid on our hands, for the least we could do was to nurse him after he was injured on my account, and I must needs be extra attentive to him. So I made the most of my opportunities; he couldn't get away, and I talked to him day and night of our glorious struggle for freedom. And you know he was on parole, so he couldn't fight me. And after a while he began to see things differently, and I began to see him differently. And I was afraid, if I didn't keep thumping away at him, that he'd slip back into being a loyalist, so I just had to marry him, that I might keep him on our side."

Kitty laughed heartily, and gave her a hug. "Such patriotism," she said. "You have outdone me, for I have not yet sacrificed my heart to the cause."

"It was not such a terrible sacrifice," replied Elspeth, demurely, "for Christopher is really worth having since he has had the hard life of a soldier to make a man of him. He shall tell you his experiences, and you will see. I ought to be jealous of you, Kitty, but for some reason, I'm not. If it had been any one else for whom he had such esteem I might, but of you, my blessed old Kitty, I couldn't be. Ah, he was honest, he told me all about it. Are you sorry that — that we liked each other?"

"Am I sorry? I am perfectly delighted; I could ask no pleasanter surprise. Dear old Christopher, he has done me many kindnesses."

"And you flouted him. Yes, I know you did. He told me things that made me see that you didn't love him; women see through those things quicker then men. I couldn't have taken him otherwise. I couldn't have been disloyal to you, Kitty. How many things have happened since we sat in the old elm tree, and signed the Declaration of Independence. Alas, our independence will cost us more blood than we dreamed. You have heard that our dear Robert laid down his life."

"Yes, I heard, and I grieved for you, Elspeth, although at the time my own sorrow seemed a mountain's weight to me. Your father, where is he?"

"My father has escaped, so far, unscathed. He is with the Northern army. And your father, Kitty, I must go this moment and speak to him. The dear man, to have gone through so much; to have given so much for his country! How I honor him! And your mother?"

"She is a true patriot."

"What else could she be with such a husband! The Van Nesses are coming around finely. Mr. William Van Ness, I fear, is incorrigible, and Mrs. Rush is having too good a time entertaining the red-coats to come over to us yet. Have we not need of gratitude toward the French? Did you see the French army when it passed through here?"

"Did I not? Such fine-looking men in their white uniforms, six thousand of them. They came down Front Street and encamped on the Common. Ah, Elspeth, many days will not suffice to tell all that has happened since we met."

"May we pass many in each other's society. But now I will change places with Christopher. I want to talk with your father. Come here, Chris, Kitty wants you."

He came over to them smiling.

"Oh, Christopher, I am so glad," was Kitty's greeting.

"Are you? I thought you would be. After all,

Kitty, it is due to you. I shouldn't be here but for a friend of yours."

"Why, how is that?"

"I was taken prisoner at King's Mountain, not before I was thoroughly sick of warfare, however. Such cruelties as Tarleton allowed: such wanton horrors as the Tories committed gave me a revulsion of feeling, and my sympathies for my own side grew less in proportion as the cruelties increased. But I was a soldier. I had thrown in my fortunes with the royalists. I could not back out. Well, as I said, at King's Mountain I got a little scratch and was made prisoner. As we stood all huddled together, there came along a young sergeant from the Maryland troops. He asked one of my company if he knew whether any one by the name of Van Ness were among the prisoners, and I was pointed out to him. It was — Kitty, guess who."

Kitty was silent.

"Your old friend, my old enemy, Lloyd Holliday. Such a fine fellow he is. He took me in charge, and no brother could have been treated more considerately. He went with me before the commanding officer and told him of a little occurrence which we both remember, eh, Kitty! It was he that rode forth from my sister's stable that night."

"I know, and I shall never forget how generous you were on that occasion."

"Nor did he, it seems, consider it a small thing, although it was simply a negative act, after all. At any rate, I reaped the benefit of it. For at once I was allowed to go North on parole. I had an uncle living near Albany to whom I concluded to go, and Elspeth has doubtless told you the rest."

"That you believe in us and the righteousness of our resistance."

He nodded.

"It is brave of you, Christopher, to acknowledge your change of opinions. Not all are so brave."

"They are obstinate rather than cowardly."

"Maybe, but the result is the same. And Lloyd — Mr. Holliday — is a sergeant?"

"Yes; a late promotion for bravery."

"He — was well?"

"Yes. He bade me good-by with his best compliments to you when I should see you. And he made the wish, sentimental rather than soldierly, that I might speed well with my love affairs."

Kitty's eyes fell.

"And I have sped well. Elspeth is — you know what she is, Kitty. You know what a prize I have won."

"I know she is a darling," returned Kitty, fervently.

"I shall send Mr. Holliday word, as soon as I can. Indeed, I promised I would let him know how I fared. I shall tell him his good wish is fulfilled."

Elspeth joined them. "How comes it, Miss Kitty, we hear of no wedding gowns for you?" she asked. "Is there no gallant to whom you are pledged?"

Kitty flushed up. "No," she answered. "No one."

"See her blush, Christopher. I'll warrant there's some one to whom her thoughts fly o' nights."

Kitty was silent.

"We must get her a husband, Chris. We must look out for her as behooves an aunt and uncle. Do you know of any pretty fellow for her?"

"None just at hand."

"What of this Master Holliday? It seems to me I've heard some pretty tales of him. Would he not look beyond Maryland for a wife?"

The color rose to Kitty's very hair.

Christopher noticed it. "Zounds!" he exclaimed aloud. And then he thought, "What an ass, what a bungler am I. I see it all now, the generous fellow." Then he said: "Don't let's tease Kitty, Elspeth. Never mind about a husband for Kitty; she'll find one for herself."

Kitty raised her eyes gratefully. Dear old Chris! he always did do the thoughtful, considerate thing when he could, she thought.

But she did not know that there went forth that very night a letter to the young soldier lying under the stars in the far South which should make a new day for him.

A week did Elspeth and Christopher remain, and in that time Cicely came to town to meet these friends of Kitty's of whom she had heard so much.

"I'm glad Elspeth is married," she told Kitty confidentially, "for now I can have you all to myself, without sharing you with her. Married people don't need any one but each other," which last remark showed what a very old-fashioned and single-hearted little maid was Cicely.

"You must know my dear little Mary Zane, too," Kitty said to Elspeth. "She is now about as old as I was when we left New York. She has from the first had an ardent love for me, and many a restful hour I have spent with her. Her father, though of a Quaker family, is a decided Tory, and more than once a part of his furniture has been seized because he refused to pay the tax. But Mary, the dear child, does not agree with her father. She has a hero and a heroine — Thomas Mendenhall and my humble self. These can do no wrong, in her opinion."

"I never knew you to do wrong," returned Elspeth, sturdily.

"Not when I used to run off from Aunt Joanna when she set me tasks, and once snipped her best modesty-piece all to bits because I was so very angry with her?"

"Ah, well, that was a childish rage and not to be compared to her furies."

"No, no, I am still a naughty girl, sometimes very rebellious and wicked."

"Ah, so wicked," said Elspeth, standing on tip-toe to take her friend's face between her hands and kiss it. "Kitty, dear, promise me, your old friend, that you will come and make her a visit when she is back in New York."

"I shall like to," returned Kitty, simply. And they parted with this promise.

But it was not soon to be that Elspeth was back in her old home, for warfare waxed hotter and hotter, winter and summer, until one night, in the latter part of the autumn of 1781, Kitty, roused from her first slumbers, heard old Hurry the watchman making his rounds. It was not the usual cry of "Past midnight and all's well," but something strange, and often repeated with more or less unction, 'Bast dree o'glock undt Gornvallis is daken!"

CHAPTER XX.

ONE FOURTH OF JULY.

THE old Liberty bell rang out the glad news of victory to an exultant people, and all over the country the bells swung joyously, the smoke of bonfires arose, wild huzzas rent the air. The ragged rebels, the poor half-starved but indomitable troops, who had so long suffered privation and defeat, were eulogized the length and breadth of the land. But the war was not yet terminated, although hostilities were about over. Rochambeau with his army in Virginia awaited events. One after another the afflicted cities of the South were evacuated by the enemy, Savannah first, then Charleston. It was clear that little more fighting would be done, and those whose terms of enlistment had expired now began to flock home. But there were other trials to be endured, other problems to be met by the patriotic leaders; for the beginning of 1782 saw not a dollar in the treasury, and that devoted friend of the people, Robert Morris, having exhausted all the means

he could control, was overcome by discouragement, and almost ready to resign. Only the love his men bore their beloved Washington prevented a serious disturbance among the troops, for many a soldier, after enduring untold hardships, was obliged to return home without a penny in his pocket. Yet there was rejoicing far and near, for the signs of peace were already in prospect, despite the determination of England to continue the war.

It was one March morning that Kitty, walking home from a Lenten service at Christ Church, saw coming up the street a halting, limping horse, led by a sunburnt man whose ragged coat flapped fantastically in the high wind. He walked slowly, giving care to the creature he led, which with hanging head plodded along. Kitty wore her mask, for the winds were too harsh for her fair cheeks, but as she reached the door she bared her face, and stood on the step to watch the approaching pair. They interested her somehow, even at a distance. As they came nearer she gave a little exclamation, and ran down the steps to the sidewalk. It could not be, and yet, —

The man approaching saw her: his hand went up to his tattered hat and he waved it joyously.

He led the horse up to the sidewalk. "She's

pretty well broken, but she's done her duty," he said, looking at the horse proudly. "Kitty, Kitty, don't you know your Lady Gay?"

Kitty knew some one else, too, but she leaned over, and taking the creature's head between her hands, she kissed her over and over again, her eyes full of tears.

"Oh, Lloyd, oh, Lloyd," she murmured. "You have come, you have brought Lady Gay. What wonderful thing is this. I am so glad, so glad."

"To see me? Kitty, Kitty."

"Let us take her around to the stable," said Kitty, hiding her face in Lady Gay's mane, and ignoring the question. "My dear old pet, my Lady Gay, you belie your name, but never mind. Tell me how you came by her. My father left her in the North when he was ordered South, and yet you bring her home."

"She has had several masters, I fancy. One of your father's friends came across her running wild after a battle; he caught her, and she passed into the service of his colonel, who must have taken her South with him, for this same man came upon her again. She must have been captured, for 'twas a redcoat who had been riding her. He was killed, and again our friend took possession of her. I saw him on her back one day, and knew her too well to be mistaken in

her, and I think she knew me. I was able to strike a bargain for her, and we've kept company ever since. She has been a great comfort."

"I am very glad," said Kitty, in a low tone.

"I knew the star on her forehead, and that queer little spot on her shoulder that you showed me one day."

"Ah, it is Lady Gay. I could no more forget her than I could forget a human friend, nor fail to recognize her. What a strange experience she has had."

They had reached the little stable by this time, and Lloyd led the horse in, saying: "We have had more than one interview in a stable, Kitty. I do not forget one or two which have been dear memories to me. I can see a little maid's anxious face looking at me when I lay in the hay. I can remember her eager words, her kind ministrations, — ah, Kitty."

She stood very still, her hand stroking the horse by her side. Somehow words did not come easily.

"And Christopher is married after all," Lloyd went on.

"After all."

"And he married your dear friend. Were you sorry?"

"I was very, very glad, scarce anything has ever pleased me more."

"And my would-be heroism was for naught. Ah, Kitty, I meant to be an honest gentleman. Did I make a mistake? Christopher's letter — made me think — perhaps — Look at me, Kitty. I haven't seen your eyes once. Your dear eyes, that always tell the truth. Are you — glad to see me?" He lifted her chin gently, but the eyes were not raised.

"I've come all this way to you, Kitty, in my ragged coat. I did not stop at home. I came as straight as I could to give you back your horse, and to tell you something that I meant to say on that last night — but Christopher — you see I couldn't — and now I must — I cannot wait to kneel before you in such dress as your suitor should wear. Kitty —"

She looked up, and suddenly Lady Gay felt herself of no consequence whatever. She gave a little whinny, and rubbed her nose against Lloyd's shoulder. But even then she was ignored, and it was only when Abigail Wright's old red cow planted herself in the doorway and turned a pair of surprised eyes upon the occupants of the stable, which she considered her own special quarters, remonstrating with a gentle "Moo!" that Lady Gay received the attention she looked for.

"I used to be dreadfully afraid of cows," Kitty remarked, looking at Sukey, and feeling that it would be a relief to say something commonplace.

Lloyd laughed. "You shall never have one within gunshot of you, if I can help it, even if you are going to live on a plantation."

Kitty started. "Oh!" she exclaimed. "Get away, Sukey! I must go; I want my mother," and making a sudden dart, she ran past the cow, up the long garden walk, and into the house. After a few minutes, Lloyd slowly followed her.

A half hour later Kitty's father sent for her. She looked at her mother wistfully. "Come with me," she said pleadingly.

"Why, my love, you are not afraid of your father!"

"No, but"—

"That 'but' expresses volumes. I'll come." And together they went to where Captain De Witt and Lloyd awaited them.

Kitty's father held out his hand to her, and she went to him, hiding her face on his shoulder.

"And so my bird is going to migrate," he said. "At least, I hear that a nest is waiting for her further south."

Kitty said never a word, only gave his hand a pressure.

"And what say you, Margaret?" he went on. "This young man insists that the nest is big enough

for us all. He tells me he shall have the care of a big plantation left him by his grandfather: that he needs an older, if not a wiser, head to help him manage it. And as for our daughter, it seems a good deal for her to undertake alone. So how should you like to give the benefit of your experience, and spare us the need of a separation?"

He looked so pleased and smiling that it was quite evident what his wishes were in the matter; and his wife's face reflected his feelings, for she saw where his hope of happiness and content lay. His own fortunes ruined, or nearly so, she saw that here the opportunity for an active life opened to him, and that it would settle many a vexatious problem.

And, therefore, a little more than a year after, there was a great stir and flutter in Mrs. Wright's quiet house; and such a parade of silks and brocades, such powdering and bedizening, as went on would have made a stranger suppose that a ball was contemplated. In one of the rooms stood a fair-haired girl in a white satin gown. She held a little box from which she lifted a string of milk-white pearls, and these were clasped around her neck by a merry, brown-eyed lass.

"There, now, girls, she is adorned. Lloyd's gift was the last touch. Is she not the sweetest bride?"

she cried. "Ah, me! I do not wonder Lloyd lost his heart to her. Tuck this rosebud in your bodice, Mary Zane, and you can bestow it upon Thomas Mendenhall later. See her blush, Kitty. Mark my words, that will be a match yet. Now are we all ready?"

And Cicely, in her bridesmaid's gown, led the way downstairs; and in what seemed a very short space of time, Mr. White, the rector of Christ Church, was pronouncing Lloyd and Kitty man and wife. And then down the aisle came the long bridal procession, — Kitty and Lloyd, Cicely and Sam Stone, Mary Zane and Thomas Mendenhall, and a dozen others. Wedding parties were big affairs in those days, and it was not uncommon to have twelve bridesmaids and as many groomsmen.

Kitty had but one regret! Elspeth was not present. A very small but very important member of her household detained her. His name was George Washington Van Ness. And Kitty was to see this newcomer when she should make that visit which she had promised to do before she went to her own home in Maryland.

"At last, at last I am to see my own old home," she said to her mother, who looked at her wistfully, with a little shake of her head. Kitty understood

why when, eager and expectant, she arrived at the familiar gateway. She gave one glance through the grating, and then shrank back. "Oh, Lloyd!" she said.

He smiled at her, "You want to go in, Kitty?"

"Yes, yes, I want to," but there was disappointment in her tone.

Once inside the gate she looked around: the stoop in front of the house was falling to pieces, only a few wisps of stems were left of the once luxuriant vines. The garden was a bare and trampled spot, not a blade of grass, not a flower visible. Every tree was gone; of the old elm, around which clustered so many happy recollections, only a stump was left. The fences were broken down, the out-buildings either gone entirely, or so dilapidated as to be hardly recognized. All was ruin and desolation. But a few days before the British had evacuated New York and such was the condition of more than one fine old place.

As Kitty realized it all her chin quivered, and she tried to wink away the tears that filled her eyes. "And I have so longed to see it," she said. "I did so love it, my old home. Oh, Lloyd, it can never be the same again."

"My dearest heart," he replied, "I am so sorry. I wish it were otherwise, but it is the result of war."

"I know it, but I did not realize that it would be so utterly barren and bare. However, I am glad I came," she looked up and smiled, "for now I have not a single regret in going to my own home, my new home. Come, let us go to Elspeth, the Van Nesses have no such forlorn place to show. Christopher has that good fortune, he steps into his old home, finding it well preserved."

"The family have all gone, then?"

"Yes, they have all gone to Nova Scotia, Mrs. Rush and her husband too; and Aunt Joanna is on her way to another continent. Come, let us go; the place seems full of ghosts," she gave a little sigh. The old life was done with forever.

She did not even look back as they turned away. "I can only look forward now," she said, "and after all, it seems very bright ahead."

* * * * * *

A pleasant salt breeze was blowing up from the bay across the lawn in front of an old yellow house in lower Maryland. Two or three small boats rocked on the water, near to a long landing which stretched out on one side a cove. A dozen little pickaninnies tumbled over each other on the sandy shore. Long fields of tobacco lay beyond the house, and stretching away toward the south was an orchard of peach trees.

From the fields came the sound of voices singing, —

"Air dey writin', air dey writin',
Air dey writin' on de wall?"

It was near the end of day, and there was prospect of rest and feasting and fun for the laborers.

In the big kitchen beyond the great house, a fat negress was frying chicken, now and then giving orders in a vehement manner to a corps of subordinates. "Yuh, Jake, fetch in some water. Mirandy, what yuh gapin' outen de do' fo'? 'taint time for the cay'age. Yuh mus' think yuh is quality, de way yuh has time on yo' han's."

The weird melody in the tobacco fields rose and fell in more distinct rhythm. A very small, very black urchin, outside one of the cabins in the quarters, kept time by patting Juba solemnly, in baby imitation of an old man who was carried away by the singing.

Then a voice was heard calling from the front porch. "Father, mother, they're coming, they're coming," and a figure clad in a light muslin frock came running down the steps. "Cuff," she said, to one of the small negroes at hand, "go tell Book to tell your master the carriage is coming." And the youngster, tumbling head over heels, made off toward

a little inclosure near the barn. "I tell marster, Miss Kitty," he said, his eagerness to take the news breaking through the usual rule of allowing only the person delegated to perform a given task. Kitty watched him go. The wind ruffled her fair hair, her cheeks were a delicate pink. She looked very girlish to be mistress of a large plantation.

There was the sound of some one approaching through the wide hall. "Clump, clump, clump." Kitty did not turn, she knew too well who it was. "They're coming, father," she said.

"So I heard you announce. Where's your mother?"

"In the garden with Prissy. There are a few roses left that she wanted to gather for the still."

"And Lloyd?"

Kitty linked her arm in her father's as he reached her. She nodded toward the little paddock where a sedate old mare was pastured. "He's looking at that blessed Lady Gay. Isn't she 'pompered,' as Uncle Zenas says?"

"Every one is 'pompered' down here."

"But none of us are idle. Mother and I have had a busy day in the store room, the garden, the linen room, and everywhere."

Her father patted her hands softly. "Yes, a busy life has the chatelaine of such an establishment."

"You are not idle either. I do not see how Lloyd could attend to it all. He says it is such a relief to have an accurate accountant to see to the books, while he has an eye to outside matters. And as for mother, I could not do without her. There, I see Pomp's old grizzly head. Run open the gate, Cuff. Hurry, your master will get there before you."

An old-fashioned lumbering carriage made its way up the driveway. The footman clambered down and opened the door with a flourish as the horses stopped. A pair of brown eyes looked forth.

"Cicely! Cicely!" cried Kitty, "you are really here. Here, Chloe, take these traps. Here we all are, Mrs. Stone. Sam, you look as happy as I knew you would."

"And let me look at you," said the new Mrs. Sam Stone. "You are as blooming as possible, Kitty."

"And well may I be. I am a busy and a happy woman."

From the tobacco fields the workers began to file toward the big storehouses.

Lady Gay put her head over the fence, and nickered to the horses Pomp drove toward the stable.

"What a dear and lovely home," said Cicely, as she entered the hall with Kitty.

"Is it not? And yours is not unlike it. We did

not know, when you were baking johnny-cakes that morning we first saw Sam, so long ago, that you were creating such a havoc with his heart, and that we should one day be neighbors down here. It is very good of you to come to me first. Ah, Cicely, is it not a joy to know that peace now is absolute, and that we and our dear ones need no more be harassed and troubled? Tell me all your news of your parents and Phebe and John."

"They are all well, and John is doing quite as much with his one arm as most men with two. Father and mother will live with Phebe. I saw your cousin Cynthia, not long ago, and she sent her love to you. She is now as ardent an admirer of our great Washington as you could wish. And what is your news?"

"Not much more than you have already heard. Elspeth and her family will visit us during the summer. We are going to give a party in your honor, Mrs. Stone, and 'twill come off to-morrow night, so we will celebrate the anniversary of our freedom, the glorious Fourth. I hope 'twill not be very, very warm. I do so want you to see how fine a company we can assemble. But there comes mother with her roses;" and the two ran to meet her.

Just as the sun dropped behind the horizon, there came the report of a cannon, and the group gathered

on the porch saw a puff of smoke rising from a little point of land jutting out into the bay.

"What is that?" cried Kitty.

A small woolly head popped up. Cuff's duty was that of Kitty's special messenger, so he did not dare go down to the point, where a hilarious crowd had congregated, but his eyes glistened and his teeth shone as he said, "Dat — dat — Fort July, Miss Kitty." And down popped the head again.

From that time out till late into the next night, the noise of popping and banging was heard. Such a time as they made of it! Every one on the place had a holiday.

"Dat de gran'est speechifyin' mah yers eber hyar," was Uncle Pomp's decision regarding Captain De Witt's address, made to the gathering of neighbors the next afternoon.

"Hit ain't so gre't to mah min' as Mars Lloyd's," said Cuff.

"Git out, yuh foolish chile! Mars Lloyd ain' no speechifier."

"He are, too," contradicted Cuff, loyal to the last.

All day long the fun kept up. Queer noises were heard unexpectedly from almost any quarter; gunpowder filled the air.

"Dis yer Yanky Doody are first-rate," pronounced

the musician of the place, as he started the tune on his old fiddle. "I'se bleedged ter play it fo' de quality ter night."

The stars came out. Bonfires lighted up the dark corners. The guests assembled; ladies with riding-skirts over their satin dresses, young men in powdered wigs and with silver buckles shining. Candles twinkled from the sconces and candelabra in the big drawing-room. From twenty miles around came the company.

With all the stateliness and dignity of the period did they tread the minuet; with wonderful steps did they lead off through all the graceful figures, while the ceremonious bow of the squire was courtesied to by the dame.

It was growing late when old Unc' Moses tuned his fiddle for the last time, and tucked it under his chin. And then came Yankee Doodle.

The music had such a merry swing. The enthusiasm of patriotism is too much for them. The sound of the scraping bow is all but lost in the rollicking song, in which first one and then another joins. Up and down, "Yankee Doodle dandy." They pause breathless, but as they file out into the porch, and even after they take their leave, the spell is still upon them. Down the level road they go, one after another. The sounds become fainter and fainter. "Yankee Doodle dandy." Old

Moses, making his way to the quarters, where the "plink a plunk" of a banjo is still heard, draws the strains softly from his fiddle.

The bonfires die down; the first faint light of dawn tinges the eastern sky; but the fires of liberty still burn, and the light of peace enfolds the homes made free by the blood of our sires.

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